

Transformations of Time and Temporality  
in Medieval and Renaissance Art

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# Transformations of Time and Temporality in Medieval and Renaissance Art

*By*  
Simona Cohen



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[PLATE 2. CH. TWO – Fig. 8, p. 34]









[PLATE 4. CH. FOUR – Fig. 18, p. 67]





















[PLATE 10. CH. SIX – Fig. 60, p. 153]





















[PLATE 16. CH. NINE – Fig. 139, p. 302]





## INTRODUCTION

Time has often been called the most essential yet most illusive concept formed by man. Like time itself, the concept thereof is constantly changing. The assumption that time was conceived in a different way by those living in the Renaissance as compared to their medieval predecessors seems to be a matter of consensus, primarily among historians. It has been illustrated by the new historical consciousness, the pragmatic approach to temporality, and increased emphasis on existential values. Although studies that focus on specific concepts of time and temporality, as expressed in Renaissance philosophy and literature, have not been lacking, few art-historians have endeavored to meet the challenge in the visual arts. The idea of identifying and analyzing such elusive and abstract concepts in Renaissance iconography did not deter Erwin Panofsky from publishing his classic study of "Father Time" in 1939 and the fascinating interpretation of "Titian's Allegory of Prudence" in 1955. But the fact that his theories and suppositions have not been questioned or challenged and are blindly repeated to this day, more than half a century later, demonstrate, in my opinion, the ossification of our progress in this field. The aim of this book is to present a comprehensive and multifaceted picture of the dynamic concepts of time and temporality in medieval and Renaissance art, as they were adopted and interpreted in speculative, ecclesiastical, socio-political, propagandist, moralistic, and poetic contexts. An underlying assumption is that the visual formulation of such an abstract concept often constitutes a penetrating medium of expression, embodying various cognitive and emotive levels, combining overt and covert significance and contrasting the dialectical factors that render time so ambivalent. I wish to emphasize that visual depictions of time or temporal concepts in the Renaissance are not to be conceived primarily as illustrations to texts, even when they propound to illustrate a textual source, as in the case of Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo*. As in music, visual arts have a language of their own, communicative media which are not subservient to those of verbalization. My aim is to investigate and illuminate the non-verbal means of expression supported by the comparative and interdisciplinary tools of iconographical studies.

Questions will be examined regarding changing perceptions of time, assumptions regarding an increasingly secular as opposed to a religious

approach, the emerging sense of self-determination rooted in the practical use of time, the morality and expedience of controlling time, and the perception of time as a threat to human existence and cultural achievements. The concurrent multi-faceted trajectories of speculation, theories of natural science, affects of socio-economic and historical events, transformations in humanistic cultural values, and other related issues will be investigated through the media of artistic expression. Literary and philosophical sources will be adduced to elucidate both theoretical and concrete issues related to the art works but will not constitute primary objectives.

Part of my undertaking has involved studies of classical and medieval precedents and antecedents, both in literary and artistic contexts. Following the introductory chapters are five studies that focus on specific time-related topics: The Romanesque Zodiac; The Personification of Time in Illustrations to Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo*; Time, Virtuousness and Wisdom in Giorgione's Castelfranco Fresco; *Kairos/Occasio*—Vicissitudes of Propitious Time from Antiquity to the Renaissance; and *Veritas filia temporis*: Time and Truth in *Cinquecento* Propaganda. These studies represent particular aspects of the artistic theme, from the twelfth to the seventeenth century, and illustrate the geographical diffusion, regional contributions (primarily but not exclusively in Italy), chronological developments, and shifts in socio-cultural factors that make up a multifaceted puzzle, albeit with many missing pieces that wait to be inserted by the readers.

PART ONE

SOURCES AND PROTOTYPES OF THE RENAISSANCE  
ICONOGRAPHY OF TIME



## CHAPTER ONE

### CONCEPTS OF TIME IN CLASSICAL PHILOSOPHY

Visual representations of a cosmic time dimension evolved in classical antiquity, if not before, from concepts of temporality proliferated by popular lore, religious and eschatological beliefs, astronomical-astrological theories, and philosophical speculation. Although philosophical concepts as such are beyond the realm of my study, a concise summary of some early conceptions will help to demonstrate the relationship between ideas and images, all of which would have significant traces in the Renaissance.

The earliest Greek philosophers defined the all-embracing superior forces in temporal terms. According to later authors, Thales (6th c. B.C.) already sought to define a universal and primeval principle (*arche*) without beginning or end. It is thought that the first one to define time in terms of human experience was Heraclitus (5th c. B.C.), who stressed flux and change.<sup>1</sup> Plato later attributed to him the idea that nothing really is, but all things are becoming.<sup>2</sup> Several factors, such as change involving motion and continuity, were to become elementary for later philosophies of time. Continuity of motion suggested rhythm or a hidden harmony. A well known fragment attributed to Heraclitus states: "You cannot step twice into the same river; for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you".<sup>3</sup> Despite the revolutionary nature of his observations on the flux of time, Heraclitus perceived a hidden unity as the universal principle, harmony as opposing tension.<sup>4</sup> In hypothesizing an underlying unity, Heraclitus avoided the implications of destruction and termination inherent in his concept of flux. His solution was representative of the Greek principle of time as something basically restorative or cyclic. Only with the advent of Roman speculation did western philosophy come to terms with the true significance of flux in relation to human experience and existence. This

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<sup>1</sup> See G.S. Kirk, *Heraclitus, The Cosmic Fragments*, Cambridge, 1954, frag. 41. Jonathan Barnes, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, London & New York, ©1979, revised 1982, reprod. 1993, 1996, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, *Thaetetus*, 154D–152E; Benjamin Jowett (trans.), Online ebook: Project Gutenberg, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Kirk (as in note 1), frag. 41.

<sup>4</sup> Frag. 41 (as in note 1): "that which is wise is one; to understand the purpose which steers all things through all things".



was the leitmotif of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* (1st c.), where he stated: "Nothing is constant in the whole world. Everything is in a state of flux, and comes into being as transient appearance. Time itself flows on with constant motion, just like a river: for no more than a river can a fleeting hour stand still."<sup>5</sup> One cannot overemphasize Ovid's influence on the concept of time and its visual manifestations in the Renaissance. Illuminators of Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo*, for example, would depict the flow of time through that of a river.

The image of the circle was used by Heraclitus to express cyclic time, where beginning and end are one, promoting the evolution of the circular form as an icon of perfection—symbol of the universal law, of unity and harmony.<sup>6</sup> The connection of the concept of *apeiron* (infinity), conceived by Anaximander (6th c. B.C.) as the source or substratum, was manifested in the transmutation of time and space by a circular form, as a sphere or ring, to symbolize temporal as well as spatial infinity.<sup>7</sup> The circle would constantly reappear as the image of the universal logos. This cyclic approach was applied to historic events and the rise and fall of civilizations; it influenced the ideas of Plato and Aristotle, was expressed in the scheme of destruction and rebirth in the beliefs of Empedocles and the Stoics, and was embodied in Pythagorean and Orphic concepts of reincarnation and resurrection.<sup>8</sup>

The concepts of circular motion and rational activity were interrelated.<sup>9</sup> Perpetual planetary motion was compared to that of the human soul.<sup>10</sup> Analogies between *microcosmos* and *macrocosmos* underlay the conception that the cyclic functioning of the human body is assimilated to that of the divine celestial bodies.<sup>11</sup> Here again we find a cosmic theory with temporal contexts that would find expression in the multiple depictions of astrological phenomena, stellar motions and the adoption of horoscopes in both religious and secular art of the Renaissance.

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<sup>5</sup> *Metamorphoses*, XV, lines 179–181, trans. M.N. Innes, *Ovid, Metamorphoses*, Harmondsworth, 1974, 339.

<sup>6</sup> Frag. 103 (as in note 1).

<sup>7</sup> See F.M. Cornford, *Principium Sapientiae, The Origins of Greek Philosophical Thought*, Cambridge, 1965, 176ff; Steven M. Rosen, *Dimensions of Apeiron. A Topological Phenomenology of Space, Time and Individuation*, Amsterdam & New York, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> See W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. II, Cambridge, 1969, 427–30.

<sup>9</sup> Guthrie (as above), vol. I, 353, 356.

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. Aristotle, *De anima*, 405a 30. Walter Stanley Hett (trans.), *On the Soul*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, Loeb Classical Library, 1957.

<sup>11</sup> Regarding the Pythagorean analogy, see Guthrie (as in note 8), vol. I, 208–12.

The search for unity in nature led Parmenides (6th c. B.C.) to a concept of reality different from that of Heraclitus. According to scholarly interpretations, he held that only the eternal and immutable are real, whereas the sensible world, in its state of flux, is delusory. Thus he denied the very existence of change; that what exists is eternal, neither coming into being nor perishing.<sup>12</sup> Identification of the eternal with immobility had repercussions in art. The immobility of anthropomorphic deities became an expression of their eternal and metaphysical existence, outside of time and space. The concept of circular motion as an image of divine intelligence, or its manifestation in cyclic time, also found expression in the divine attributes of the wheel, the sphere or other round images, either held by the deity or encompassing him (Figs. 1–3).<sup>13</sup>

Anaxagoras of Ionia (early 5th c. B.C.) visualized the origin of the universe as chaos, upon which order was imposed by a cause outside of and distinct from nature that he called Mind (*Nous*). Accordingly, he claimed “after Mind initiated motion, it began to withdraw from all that was moved and all that was divided”.<sup>14</sup> This synthesis between the Heraclitan concept of constant motion and change and the Parmenidean one of immobility and unity influenced subsequent speculative theories of time and space. We will see that the idea was given visual form as the anthropomorphic, immobile deity turning the wheel of time.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See Guthrie (as in note 8), vol. I, 381–82; Karl R. Popper, Anne F. Peterson (eds.) with assistance of J rgen Mejer, *The World of Parmenides. Essays on the Presocratic Enlightenment*, London & New York, 1988, viii; Joseph Margolis, *The Flux of History and the Flux of Science*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1993, 9–10; Ronald C. Hoy, “Parmenides’ Complete Rejection of Time,” *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 91, 1994, 573–98; Philip Turetzky, *Time. Problems in Philosophy*, London & New York, 1998, 8–9; F. Macdonald Cornford, *Plato and Parmenides*, London, 1939, repr. 2000, 152; Joseph Margolis & Jacques Catudal, *The Quarrel Between Invariance and Flux*, Phila., 2001, 11; John Palmer, *Parmenides and Presocratic Philosophy*, Oxford, 2009, 24.

<sup>13</sup> On circular motion, see Aristotle: “And there is no continuous motion except movement in place, and of this only that which circular is continuous” (*Metaphysics* 12.6; 1071b 11); For Aristotle, the first heaven moves in unceasing, circular motion, which means that the first heaven is eternal: “Therefore the first heaven must be eternal” (*Metaphysics* 12.7; 1072a 24); the first heaven then communicates motion to all other things. What is eternally in motion, however, requires an unmoved mover: “There is therefore also something which moves it. And since that which moves and is moved is intermediate, there is something which moves without being moved, being eternal, substance, and actuality” (*Metaphysics* 12.7; 1072a 23–26), “Some say time is the motion of the world... although even the part of a revolution is a certain time, but it is not a revolution.” (*Physics*, IV, 218a34 ff.).

<sup>14</sup> Frags. 12 & 13, in Guthrie (as in note 8), Vol. II, 273–274. On the development of these concepts, see J.J. Mooij, *Time and Mind, The History of a Philosophical Problem*, Leiden, 2005.

<sup>15</sup> E.g. see Doro Levi, “Aion”, *Hesperia*, 1944, figs. 14–15, 18, 20.



Fig. 1. *Cosmic Allegory*, mosaic of Chahba-Philippopolis, 3rd. c., Damascus Museum.

The Pythagoreans defined time within the context of numerical philosophy. Stemming from the cult of Orphism and allied to a metaphysical concept of man's place in the universe, their approach proved fundamental for the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle and ultimately in that of Christianity. Pythagoras' discovery of the numerical ratios underlying musical harmony was applied to all universal phenomena. The contrasting principles of the world were *peras* (limit) and *apeiron* (infinity). Time in the cosmos (universe) was the raw material from the *apeiron* after it had undergone the limiting principle. Consequently the term cosmos was interpreted in terms of order.<sup>16</sup> Time existed only when delimited by number and numerical limit was described in terms of extension as well as duration. The former could be seen in geometrical proportion, the latter in the regular, recurrent and harmonious motions of cosmic phenomena. The Pythagorean definition of time as a measurable phenomenon subject to a certain predictable cyclic order provided the foundation for a concrete image of this concept. If time could be measured by planetary revolutions,

<sup>16</sup> Guthrie (as in note 8), Vol. I, 208, note 1.



Fig. 2. *Phanes*, Roman relief, ca. 2nd c., Modena, Galleria Estense, su concessione del Ministero per I Beni e le Attività Culturali—Archivio Fotografico della SBSAE di Modena e Reggio Emilia.





Fig. 3. [COL. PL. 1] *Patera di Parabiago*, Silver dish (*patera*) from Parabiago, Milan, Archeological Museum, su concessione del Ministero per I Beni e le Attività Culturali, Soprintendenza per I Beni Archeologici della Lombardia.

by days and nights, and by months and years, then it could be visually represented by the same.

Plato, in differentiating between the concepts of time and eternity and establishing their relationship, drew upon Pythagorean precepts. By claiming that time came into existence together with the heavens, he placed time in relation to motion and measurement. Time (*Chronos*) was an image perceived of something beyond perception—eternity. As a function of order, time could not have existed before the creation of the cosmos (the very word signifying order). The main question facing interpreters of Plato's conception is the relationship of the temporal image to eternity. Regarding time, he wrote: "... it is made after the pattern of the

ever enduring nature, in order that it may be as like that pattern as possible; for the pattern is a thing that has been for all eternity; whereas the Heaven has been and is and shall be perpetually throughout all time".<sup>17</sup>

Particularly significant in Aristotle's philosophy of time is the relationship he defined between time (*Chronos*) and motion (*kinesis*): "For before and after are objectively involved in motion, and these qua capable of numeration constitute time".<sup>18</sup> Like Plato he distinguished the measure (time) from the measured (motion). He denied the existence of space unoccupied by bodies—void, and of time unoccupied by the movement of bodies. Time as the measure of motion was everlasting and could be expressed in numerical units. "Before" and "after" denoted the change in relative positions that made one aware of movement, leading to the conclusion that "time is neither identical with movement nor capable of being separated from it".<sup>19</sup> The interaction of spatial and temporal movement was expressed by Aristotle in the definition of time, abstracted from events, as the rotation of the sphere.<sup>20</sup> In separating the measure from the measured, Aristotle adopted the sphere as an ideal standard incorporating the interrelation between motion and time.

The contribution of Plotinus to the formation of time's visual image was neither direct nor immediate.<sup>21</sup> Neoplatonic definitions of time were important links between the concepts of the pagan philosophers and their Christian successors.<sup>22</sup> Some important elements were eventually transmitted to Christian imagery through direct or indirect Neoplatonic influences. The image of the *Nous* where Eternity resides as an unmoving circle that has the One as its center found expression, for example, in

<sup>17</sup> *Timaeus*, 38B, trans. F.M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology*, London & Bradford, 1956, 99; Richard Dacre Archer-Hind, *The Timaeus of Plato*, (London, 1888), 1923, 2009, Nabu Press, 2010.

<sup>18</sup> *Physics*, IV, xiv, 223a 28, trans. P.H. Wichsteed & F.M. Cornford, London, 1963.

<sup>19</sup> *Op. cit.*, IV, xi, 219a.

<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.*, IV, xiv, 223b.

<sup>21</sup> See Plotinus, *Enneads*, trans. S. Mackenna, London, 1969; C.H. Clark, *The Theory of Time in Plotinus*, *The Philosophical Review*, vol. 53, no. 4, July 1944, 337–58; J.F. Callahan, *Four Views of Time in Ancient Philosophy*, Cambridge, 1948, 88ff.; C.M. Sherover, *The Human Experience of Time*, New York, 1975, 63ff.; Andrew Smith, "Eternity and Time," in Lloyd P. Gerson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, Cambridge, 1996, ch. 8: 196–214; Thomas Taylor (trans.), "On Eternity and Time," in *Select Works of Plotinus*, by Plotinus, Whitefish, MT, 2005; Michael Wagner, *The Enigmatic Reality of Time: Aristotle, Plotinus and Today*, Leiden, 2008.

<sup>22</sup> See S. Sambursky & S. Pines, *The Concept of Time in Late Neoplatonism*, Jerusalem, 1971.

the image of *Phanes*, which was later revived in Renaissance iconography. Time as related to the phenomenal world and human experience was conceived as a reflection of Eternity; thus its image had to express the underlying regularity, uniformity and continuity of its parts, as manifested by the planets and the zodiac. An evaluative approach was introduced by Plotinus, assigning to time an inferior position in the hierarchy of realms. Time was a descent from the more to the less perfect. Consequently the soul of man had to rise above time and contemplate the eternal in order to attain perfection. By re-allying time to the realm of human experience, Neoplatonism helped pave the way towards a negative concept of time fostered by Christianity.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CLASSICAL PERSONIFICATIONS OF TIME

#### Chronos

Concepts of time and eternity were acquiring anthropomorphic forms in mythology and religious cults concurrent with the philosophical speculations reviewed above, if not before. By the sixth century B.C. Time occupied a prime position in cosmogonic myths of the Orphic sect.<sup>1</sup> The *Theogony* of the Orphic “Rhapsodies” begins with *Chronos*—the primordial source out of which other cosmic elements were born.<sup>2</sup> Primeval *Phanes* ‘*Protogonos*’ is produced out of an egg formed by *Chronos* (Fig. 2). A description of the physiognomy of *Phanes* follows, but none is given for *Chronos*.<sup>3</sup> Another Orphic source describes *Chronos* as a monstrous figure—a serpent with three heads, those of a bull and lion with the face of the god in the middle. This hybrid is winged and designated as *ágýratos*, non-aging or undying. Orphic epithets alternatively call him *mégas* (great) or *áévas* (eternally flowing).<sup>4</sup> Whether or not the deification of the Orphic *Chronos* was a unique phenomenon in the ancient world is a subject of debate. Although metaphors of time were numerous in classical literature, *Chronos* was not represented in the Olympic pantheon, nor was he deified in official Greek religion. He was conceived as one “who makes rough ways smooth” and “the sole declarer of the very truth” by Pindar, and as a ‘benevolent god’ who sees all things by Sophocles (both active in the 5th c. B.C.).<sup>5</sup> A later poet, Philippiades (late 4th c.), assigned to *Chronos* the role

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<sup>1</sup> See W.K.C. Guthrie, *Orpheus and the Greek Religion*, New York, (1935, revised 1952) 1966, chap. IV, 69ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Rhapsodies*, Frags. 66, 167; see *The Orphic Poems*, trans. Martin L. West, Oxford, 1983. See Emma Stafford & Judith Herrin, *Personifications in the Greek World: From Antiquity to Byzantium*, Aldershot, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> *Orphica*, Theogonies Fragment 54 (from Damascius), trans. M.L. West, Greek Hymns ca. 3rd–2nd C. B.C.; Guthrie (as in note 1), 79–80, 95–107.

<sup>4</sup> Guthrie (as in note 1), 84–86.

<sup>5</sup> Pindar, *Olympian Ode*, 10, 55 ff.; *The Odes of Pindar* with an introduction and an English translation by J. Sandys, The Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass. & London, 1915; Sophocles, *Electra*, 179. These and the following Greek epithets are quoted in W.H. Roscher, *Lexicon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, VII, suppl. 1–4, Hildesheim, 1965, 221–222 & bibliography.



of healer, but contemporary sources described him as dire, destroyer or conqueror of all.<sup>6</sup> A unique characterization of this time god as a carpenter by the comic poet Crates (early 5th c. B.C.) anticipates medieval and Renaissance depictions of God as architect of the universe.<sup>7</sup>

*Chronos*, depicted as a winged youth participating in the *Apotheosis of Homer*, is identified by a Greek inscription on a marble stele (ca. 2nd c. B.C.).<sup>8</sup> This appears to be a conflation of *Chronos* with *Aion*, whose image it resembles. *Oikoumene* beside him represents cosmic space. A visual formulation of *Chronos* based upon, or parallel with, his literary image is difficult to identify; perhaps this is due to his various associations or conflations with other time-gods, as will be discussed below.

Time's destructiveness takes on new forms in late antiquity when *Tempus* becomes a devourer and is even furnished with teeth, as in Ovid's famous passage: *Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas omnia destruitis vitiatque dentibus aevi paulatim lenta consumitis omnia morte*.<sup>9</sup>

### *Aion/Aeternitas*

By the fifth century B.C. the concept of time was clearly differentiated from that of eternity. Meanings and connotations of the Greek word *aiōn* (or *aeon*) and the adjective *aiōnios*, in classical literature, philosophy, the Septuagint and New Testament, were meticulously studied in a dissertation by Heleen Keizer (1999).<sup>10</sup> Her philological study demonstrated that *aiōn* primarily indicated time, life-lot, generation, or eternity. In the *Book of the Maccabees* (1st or 2nd c.), she found that *aiōn* and *aiōnios* were reserved for the situation after death. Gradually the definitions of

<sup>6</sup> Philippides, fr. 6, 18 (Kock); *Anthologia app.ep.* III, 281, 6: *Philae in vermin* ser. 5. See G. Kaibel (ed.), *Epigrammata Graeca*, 1878, 1050, 4: Simonides, fr. 4, 5.

<sup>7</sup> "For Time has made me bent, a clever carpenter, it is true, yet one who makes everything grow weaker." Crates, fr. 39. Among the medieval depictions, see the 13th c. MS.2554, fol. 1, in Vienna, Nationalbibliothek.

<sup>8</sup> *Apotheosis of Homer*, Greek stele of Parian marble, probably from Alexandria, London, British Museum, inv. 2191. The allegorical figures, including Chronos, and the sculptor, Archelaos, son of Apollonos of Priene, are identified by the Greek inscription. Reproduced in M. Rostrovstzeff, *Greece*, Oxford, 1969, frontispiece.

<sup>9</sup> "Time the devourer, and the jealous years that pass, destroy all things, and nibbling them away, consume them gradually in a lingering death", Ovid, *Metamorphosis*, XV, lines 233–35, trans. Mary M. Innes, *Ovid, Metamorphoses*, 1973, 341.

<sup>10</sup> Heleen M. Kaizer, *Life Time Entirety. A Study of AION in Greek Literature and Philosophy, the Septuagint and Philo*, PhD dissertation, University of Amsterdam, 1999; published 2010.

“all time” or eternity were embodied in a divinized *Aion*, whose meaning could be summarized by referring to Aristotle’s *De Caelo*.<sup>11</sup>

How were these concepts expressed in concrete visual images? Although a fragment of an artistic depiction of *Aion* was identified by an inscription on an Attic red-figure vase, nothing actually remains of this image to indicate his early iconography.<sup>12</sup> All other extant depictions do not predate the Christian era. The emergence of *Aion* in art during the first centuries of our era reflects the renewed preoccupation with time concepts, predominantly in Gnostic, Neopythagorean and Neoplatonic speculation, and in doctrines, mythologies and rituals of religious sects. A graphic illustration of Eternity, as opposed to Time, dating from the period of Plotinus and the emergence of Neoplatonism, can be seen in a third century mosaic from Antioch on the Orontes (Fig. 4).<sup>13</sup> *Aion*, identified by the Greek inscription above, is personified as a mature man with moustache and beard, wearing a wreath and turning a large wheel—the image of cyclic time. *Aion* is the unmoving mover described in Greek literature. Three additional figures seated at *Aion*’s left are named ‘future’, ‘present’ and ‘past’ and are conjointly labeled *Chronoi* by the inscription below. A definition by Plotinus expresses the same idea: “Eternity and Time are two separate things; we explain the one having its being in the everlasting kind, the other in the realm of process, in our own universe . . .”.<sup>14</sup> Eternity is thus characterized in unity, and time is characterized by its parts. The three parts of time have been equated with the three ages of man in the mosaic, as they would often appear in Renaissance art.

<sup>11</sup> “Indeed our forefathers were inspired when they made this word *aeon*. The total time which circumscribes the length of life of every creature and which cannot in nature be exceeded they named the *aeon* of each. By the same analogy also the sum of existence of the whole heaven, the sum which includes all time even to infinity is *aeon*, taking the name from *ἀεί εἶναι* [to be everlasting], for it is immortal and divine. *De Caelo*, I, 279a, trans. W.K.C. Guthrie, Cambridge, Mass., 1953, 93.

<sup>12</sup> This vase in Karlsruhe was reproduced by Doro Levi, “Aion,” *Hesperia*, 1944, 281, fig. 7. For further bibliography on Aion, see R. Chevallier, *Aion, le temps chez les Romains*, Paris, 1976; Andreas Alföldi, *Aion in Merida and Aphrodisias*, Mainz am Rhein, 1979 and Günther Zuntz, *Aion in der Literatur der Kaiserzeit*, Vienna, 1992.

<sup>13</sup> On the Antioch mosaic, discovered in excavations of the 1930s, see Levi (as above), 269–71, figs. 1, 2 & 3 and his *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, Princeton, London, The Hague, 1947; S. Campbell, *The Mosaics of Antioch*, Toronto, 1988; Katherine M. Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World*, Cambridge, 1999, 197 and Kevin Butcher, *Roman Syria and the Near East*, London & Los Angeles, 2003, esp. 458 for bibliography.

<sup>14</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, III, 7; trans. S. Mackenna, London, 1969. See also C.M. Sherover, *The Human Experience of Time*, New York, 1975, 62ff.

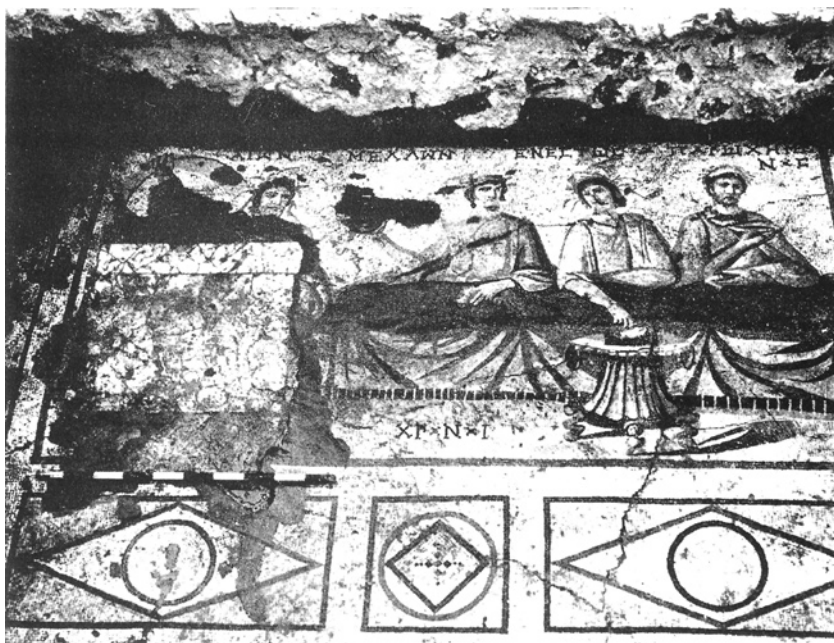


Fig. 4. *Aion and the Chronoi*, 3rd c. mosaic from Antioch.

Doro Levi, in his classic article on *Aion*, revealed the sources and evolution of this image in Greek and Roman art.<sup>15</sup> He demonstrated how the *Aion* legend, combined with related inscriptions, such as *Aeternitas* and *Saeculum Aureum*, were adopted for imperial propaganda, denoting the immortality of the emperor as well as the limitless duration of his prosperous reign. Over a millennium later the allegorical depictions of these concepts in Roman imperial contexts, especially prominent in numismatics, would provide themes and images for Renaissance sovereign propaganda.

Among the inscribed coins presented by Doro Levi, was one struck under Antoninus Pius that combined the legend *Aion* and a phoenix with radiate nimbus.<sup>16</sup> The inscription *Saeculum Aureum* (the Golden age) on a Hadrianic coin is combined with a nude male figure within a wheel, holding a globe, and surmounted by a phoenix.<sup>17</sup> Unlike the Antioch mosaic and other examples of the third century, this figure is not turning

<sup>15</sup> Levi (as in note 12).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 295, fig. 295b.

<sup>17</sup> Levi (as in note 12), 295, fig. 19e.

the wheel but stands within it.<sup>18</sup> All the motifs combine to clarify the idea that the Golden age is of limitless extension, both in terms of time and space (i.e. the wheel and globe). The globe surmounted by a phoenix and held by a woman appears with the legend *Aeternitas* on second century coins as, for example, that struck in memory of the empress Faustina (141 A.D.).<sup>19</sup> The phoenix survived in early Christian iconography and eventually underwent a Renaissance revival especially, but not exclusively, in funerary contexts (e.g. Fig. 51).

In the mosaic of Chahba-Philippopolis (ca. 244–49) *Aion* turning his wheel is one of many personifications, with identifying inscriptions, which represent natural phenomena (Fig. 1).<sup>20</sup> Agriculture, the four winds, four seasons, dew, the earth or corn goddess, and *Karpoi*, are accompanied by Prometheus modeling the first man and Psyche, led by Hermes, who will animate this '*protoplastos*'. All of these themes represent aspects of cyclic change. The presence of Prometheus, Psyche and Hermes probably attests to the belief in metempsychosis that was popular in eastern cults during late antiquity. According to their theory the circulation of spirits through matter was caused by the cosmic cycle of eternal generation.<sup>21</sup> It appears that the Chahba-Philippopolis mosaic is related to an agrarian cult, possibly that of Demeter, whose mysteries connected the death and rebirth of the corn with human immortality.

On the silver Patera of Parabiago (variously attributed between the 2nd to the 4th century) (Fig. 3), used in the mystery cult of Cybelle and Attis, *Aion* assumes a similar position among symbols of cosmic cycles.<sup>22</sup> The wheel has become a zodiacal band and *Aion* now turns it from within. The passage of the sun through the constellations, as represented by the zodiacal signs, was a means for dividing the year and thereby establishing time-units and dates. It therefore came to represent the dependence of cosmic change upon celestial phenomena. The center of the Parabiago

<sup>18</sup> A 3rd c. mosaic depiction of *Aion* or *Chronos* turning the wheel from within is located in Munich, The Glyptothek Museum.

<sup>19</sup> For the iconography of *Aeternitas* on Roman coins, see S.W. Stevenson, C.R. Smith and F.W. Madden, *A Dictionary of Roman Coins*, Hildesheim, 1969, 22–25 and [www.forumancientcoins.com/moonmoth/reverse\\_aeternitas.html](http://www.forumancientcoins.com/moonmoth/reverse_aeternitas.html) (2009).

<sup>20</sup> See M.H. Quet, "La mosaïque dite d'Aion de Shahba-Philippopolis, Philippe l'Arabe et la conception hellène de l'ordre du monde, en Arabie, à l'aube de christianisme," *Cahiers Glotz*, X, 1999, 263–30 & "Le Triptolème de la mosaïque dite d'Aion et l'affirmation identitaire hellène à Shahba-Philippopolis," *Syria*, XXVII, 2000, 181–200.

<sup>21</sup> See Franz Cumont, *Afterlife in Roman Paganism*, New York, 1959, 177–79.

<sup>22</sup> Regarding the iconography of the Parabiago dish, see M.J. Vermaseren, *Cybele and Attis, the Myth and the Cult*, London, 1977, 72–77.



plate is occupied by Cybelle (*Magna Mater*) riding the leonine *quadriga* and accompanied by Attis, whose death and resurrection symbolized the cycles of vegetation. Above are *Sol*, *Phosphoros*, *Luna* and *Hesperos*, and below are figures personifying the earth and her produce, the sea and its marine life, and the four seasons. There are obvious parallels to the Philipopolis mosaic, and the function of *Aion* as a symbol of temporal renewal is substantiated once again by the context.

Some unique and abstruse imagery on the Parabiago plate reiterates and elaborates the function of *Aion* as eternal controller of time. To the right of *Aion* in the zodiacal band is an obelisk entwined by a serpent. This has been identified as the tree of life,<sup>23</sup> or the birth rock of the Mithraic legend, which sometimes took the form of conical stele and could also be entwined by a serpent.<sup>24</sup> In my estimation, there is no justification for substituting the tree of life, a symbol of fecundity, with an inanimate object. The use of the obelisk or column in funerary contexts, however, is a key to its meaning. It is comparable, for example, to the commemorative column of Antoninus Pius and Faustina, which was placed upon a pedestal depicting their apotheosis—their deification and ascent to immortality.<sup>25</sup> According to the theory of solar attraction, souls emanated from the sun and re-ascended to it after corporal death by means of the sun's rays. Pliny, indeed, stated that the obelisk is a symbol for the sun's rays,<sup>26</sup> and since the column and obelisk could be interchanged at that time, it stands to reason that the Antonine column above the apotheosis relief is symbolic as well as commemorative. The interpretation of the obelisk, seen on the dish, as the solar agent in the ascent of souls to immortality would be in keeping with beliefs held by the Phrygian cults, especially that of Cybelle and Attis.<sup>27</sup> My interpretation might also lend support to the theory that the Patera of Parabiago, which was unearthed near a necropolis, had served to cover an amphora used as a funerary urn.

<sup>23</sup> Vermaseren (as above), 72.

<sup>24</sup> Levi (as in note 12), 297.

<sup>25</sup> The actual consecration ceremony took place in the Campus Martius, here personified and holding its obelisk. See L. Vogel, *The Column of Antoninus Pius*, Cambridge, Mass., 1973.

<sup>26</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXVI. See also A. Roulet, *The Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, Leiden, 1972, 13ff.

<sup>27</sup> Vermaseren (as in note 22), 181. See *La Patera di Parabiago*, a cura di Anna Maria Volonté, exh. cat., Città di Parabiago, 29 gennaio/7 febbraio, 2010, esp. 20–22.

The chthonian serpent, in its prolific symbolic associations, is frequently connected in some way to rebirth or restoration. Its identification with the sun was extremely common in Roman cults originating in the Near East. Periodic rebirth of nature, which took place in the spring and was celebrated in the spring festival of Attis, was perceived as part of the cosmic process dependent upon the sun's course through the ecliptic and encompassing the cyclic ascent and descent of souls. Macrobius (5th c.) wrote that the serpent portrayed on statues accompanying that of the sun-god indicated "the serpentine course of the sun".<sup>28</sup> Yet it is significant that the primary cosmic role in the Parabiago dish is allotted not to a solar deity but to *Aion* as controller of time.

Once *Aion* came to personify eternal existence, the appellation could be applied to other anthropomorphic deities as an epithet. Inscriptions and invocations tie the name of *Aion*, for example, to that of *Serapis*, Alexandrian god of fertility and of the dead.<sup>29</sup> In this synthesis, as in others, distinctly separate attributes mingle and overlap. The serpent, for example, is associated with the chthonian god *Pluto* and has manifold connections to *Serapis* as *agathos daimon* (benevolent demon) but relates to *Aion* as a symbol of time.

### Phanes and the Leontocephaline

One of the most challenging syncretistic images of late antiquity is the serpent-entwined leontocephaline found in sculpture and painting throughout the Roman Empire (Fig. 5). Many of these images originated in Mithraic sanctuaries and textual sources explicitly connected the lion face with Mithras as a solar deity. Lactantius Placidus (5th c.), in his commentary on the *Thebaid* of Statius, wrote: [Mithras] *est autem ipse sol leonis vultu cum tiara Persico habitu et utrisque minibus bovis cornua comprimens . . . Sol ineffabilis, quia principale signum inculcat et frenam, Leonem scilicet, idcirco et ipse hoc vultu fingitur . . . luna vero, quia propius taurum*

<sup>28</sup> Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, I, 17. 66–70, trans. Percival V. Davies, New York & London, 1969, 126–27; Robert A. Kaster (ed.), *Macrobius: Saturnalia*. Volume I: Books 1–2. Loeb Classical Library 510. Cambridge, MA London: Harvard University Press, 2011.

<sup>29</sup> See C. Bonner, "An Obscure Inscription on a Gold Tablet," *Hesperia*, 1944, 30–35; Levi (as in note 12), 276–77; R. Pettazzoni, "Aion-(Kronos) Chronos in Egypt," in *Essays in the History of Religions*, Leiden, 1967, 171–79.

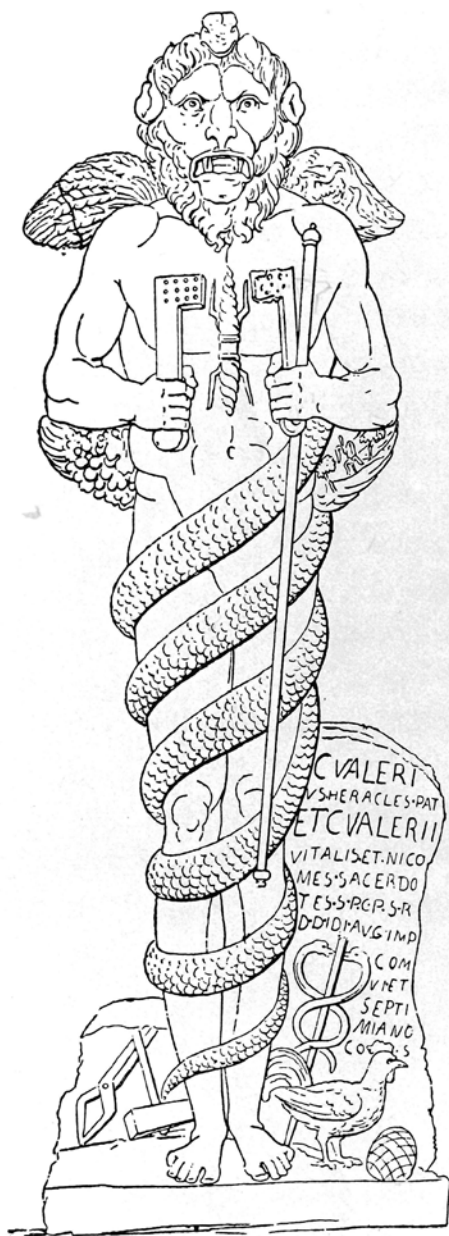


Fig. 5. *Leontocephaline* (Lion-Headed Deity), drawing of a marble statue dedicated in 190 A.D. to C. Valerius Heracles and Sons, from the Mithreum at Ostia Antica (now Museo Vaticano).

*coercet adducitque, ideo vacca [lunae] figurate est.*<sup>30</sup> This was freely quoted by the Renaissance mythologist Gregorio Giraldi (1479–1552), in his *De deis gentium* (Venice, 1548),<sup>31</sup> and a naive attempt to illustrate this literary description of Mithras was made by Bolognino Zaltieri for the third edition of Vincenzo Catari's *Le imagini degli Dei de gli antichi* (Valgrisi, Venice, 1571). Archeologically correct drawings of the serpent entwined, lion or human-headed statues with a *kalathos*, were made by Pirro Ligorio and artists of his circle, Jacopo Strada, and Etienne Duperac around the mid sixteenth century (Fig. 6).<sup>32</sup> Scholars of the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries have been divided in identifying this figure, assuming it to be either *Aion*, *Chronos* (*Kronos*), *Phanes*, the Persian *Zurvan* (*Zervan*), or some syncretistic combination of these, but conceding to its nature as a Time deity.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Following is a partial translations of the text: "he says Apollo is called various names by various peoples, for among the Achemenians he is called Titan, among the Egyptians Osiris, among the Persians, where worship is held in a cave, he is called Mithra. B what is meant by "twisting horns" (Statius *ibid* I, 720) pertains to the fact that his image is depicted holding back the horns of a reluctant bull. By this is meant that the moon receives its light from him, when it begins to be separated from its rays... The Persians are said to be the first to have discovered how to honor the Sun in caves; for in a cave there is the Sun in Persian attire, with a crown, holding a cow's horns in either hand. They say that its interpretation pertains to the Moon, for having been deemed unworthy of following her brother, she ran to him and darkened her light. With these verses he alludes to the mysteries of the rites of the Sun. F. For the sun, in the belief that the moon is inferior to his power and more humble, sits upon a bull and twists its horns... The Persians venerate the sun in caves, and here the Sun is called by his proper name Mithra, who, because he undergoes eclipse, for this reason he is venerated inside the cave. I Sun himself has the face of a lion with a crown in Perisan attire and holding a cow's horns in either hand... The ineffable sun, because it treads upon and tames the principal sign, that is Leo, for that reason it too is figured with this face, or because this god excels among the others by the strength of his holy power, as the lion does among the rest of the beasts; or because it is a rapid animal. "Lactantius Placidus, *ad. Stat. Thebaid.* 1. 719–20, p. 89 f. lines 1996 f., 2009–11, 2014 f.: See *Lactantii Placidi in Statii Thebaida commentum*, vol. I, ed. R.D. Sweeney, Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1997.

<sup>31</sup> L.G. Giraldi, *De deis gentium varia et multiplex historia*, Basel, 1548, repr. with additions in 1560.

<sup>32</sup> For details of these drawings and their sources, see *CENSUS of Antique Works of Art and Architecture Known to the Renaissance* (online), Census ID 59632, 63190, 64990, 65103, 160481, 162730, and 10007506. See David R. Coffin, "Pirro Ligorio and the Decoration of the Sixteenth Century at Ferrara," *Art Bulletin*, vol. 35, 1955, 167–85; Pirro Ligorio: *The Renaissance Artist, Architect and Antiquarian, With a Checklist of Drawings*, Penn. State University Press, 2004; Erna Mandowsky & Charles Mitchell, *Pirro Ligorio's Roman Antiquities, The Drawings in MS.XIII B.7 in the National Library in Naples*, London, 1963, 109–110 and Richard L. Gordon, "Interpreting Mithras in the Late Renaissance, 1: the 'monument of Ottaviano Zeno' (V. 335) in Antonio Lafreri's *Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae* (1564)", *Journal of Mithraic Studies*, vol. IV, 2004, 1–42.

<sup>33</sup> See Franz Cumont, *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra*, Brussels, 1896–99 and *The Mysteries of Mithra*, New York, 1956, 104ff.; Raffaele Pettazzoni, "La





Fig. 6. Jacopo Strada, *Serpent Entwined Deity of Time*, 16th c., Vienna, Codex miniatus 21.2, fol. 108, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Censu ID 59632.

Levi related the leontocephaline to the marble relief at Modena (2nd c.) that is recognized as the Orphic *Phanes* (Fig. 2). Orphic hymns described *Phanes* as *protogonos* (first-begotten), born from a cosmic egg, and primal generator of life. In the Orphic cosmogony *Kronos/Chronos* (Time) was said to have generated the cosmic egg, which was broken in two to become Heaven and Earth and also produced the incorporeal *Phanes*.<sup>34</sup> We will see that the Modena *Phanes* was among the ancient time images known to the Renaissance and even provided a model for sculpture on Alvise Cornaro's Odeon in Padua (ca. 1524) and the Marciana Library in Venice (ca. 1580s).<sup>35</sup>

The winged and nude youth within the zodiac, generated from a flaming egg in the Modena relief, resembles *Aion* of the Parabiago plate (Figs. 2 & 3). The animal masks on his chest, those of a ram, lion, and goat, were interpreted as zodiacal signs representing the solstice and equinoxes that mark the beginning of the seasons. The ubiquitous lion-headed deity reiterates the figure's dominant solar identification. One such marble statue (h.0.68) was found in 1933 near the Pope's residence at Castel Gandolfo, and probably originated from the villa of Domitian (81–96 A.D.) on the same site.

In the case of the Modena *Phanes*, the winding serpent whose head emerges from the flames below, represents the course of the sun through

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figure monstruosa del tempo nella religione mitraica," *Antiquité Classique*, XVIII, 1949, 265–77 (Eng. trans. in Pettazoni, *Essays on the History of Religions*, Leiden, 1967, 18–92, 180–92); Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, "Aion et le leontocéphale, Mithras et Ahriman," *La Nouvelle Clío*, X–XII, 1958–62, 91ff.; L.A. Campbell, *Mithraic Iconography and Ideology*, Leiden, 1968, 348ff.; Maarten Josef Vermaseren, *Mithras, the Secret God*, London, 1963 and "A Magical time God," in John R. Hinnells (ed.), *Mithraic Studies*, 1975, vol. II, 446–56; Ugo Bianchi, "Mithraism and Gnosticism," in Hinnells, *Op. cit.*, 457–65; John Hansman, "A Suggested Interpretation of the Mithraic Lion-Man Figure," in Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin (ed.), *Études mithraïques: actes du 2<sup>e</sup> congrès international*, Téhéran, Liège, 1978, 215–28 and Hubertus Von Gall, "The Lion-headed and Human-Headed God in the Mithraic Mysteries," *Ibid.*, 511–524.

<sup>34</sup> See <http://www.theoi.com/Protogenos/Phanes.html> and Maria Papathanassiou, "On the Astronomical Explanation of *Phanes*'s Relief at Modena," *Archaeoastronomy*, no. 16, *JHA*, xxii, 1991, 1–13.

<sup>35</sup> See N. Ivanoff, "Allegorie dell'Odeon e della Loggia Cornaro a Padova," *Emporium*, 1963, November, 209–15 and *La Libreria Marciana, Saggi e Memorie*, Vol. 6, 1968, 46, 53, 56, 165, figs. 6–9. The relief of *Phanes* on the Marciana *sottarco* was attributed by Ivanoff to the period of Scamozzi—after 1581. Papathanassiou (as in note 34) n. 2, wrote that "in the time of Murator (1672–1750) this relief was in the palace of the Marquis Sigismondo Este, in S. Martino a Rio (between Mantua and Modena)" and was assumedly brought from Rome. Since S. Martino a Rio became the center of an independent lordship for a cadet branch of the Este from 1501, it is possible that the *Phanes* relief was located there from the early 16th c. See *infra*, 275–78.

the ecliptic. The egg and serpent are explained in the following passage from Epiphanus in the *Orphica, Epicurus Fragment* (3rd c. B.C.–2nd c. A.D.): “And he [Epicurus] says that the world began in the likeness of an egg, and the Wind [*Kronos*—Time] and *Ananke* (inevitability, almighty law) encircling the egg serpent-fashion like a wreath or a belt then began to constrict nature”.<sup>36</sup>

Various reliefs and statues depicting serpent-entwined figures are iconographically related to the Modena figure. These are often winged, sometimes semi-zoomorphic and occasionally incorporate the zodiac or symbols of the seasons.<sup>37</sup> In the light of syncretistic tendencies, motifs of these leontocephalines have been interpreted as attributes of various deities whose powers are concentrated in one multi-potent or omnipotent god. Vermaseren claimed that the Castel Gandolfo leontocephaline, which has four wings and four-arms, with lion-heads on his knees and stomach, was influenced by an Alexandrian type of *Chronos*.<sup>38</sup> We might also note that commercial, cultural and religious contacts between India and Alexandria, which had flourished from the third century BC, reached a peak in the first century AD, when Alexandria was the second city of the Roman Empire, having become a center of cultural exchange and religious syncretism.<sup>39</sup> Alexandria, on the commercial route between India and Rome, was frequented by Indian merchants and Indians were noted among her residents. Coins were one means for transmitting iconographic conventions. Following the syncretistic tendencies demonstrated on Indo-Greek coins of the Bactrian kingdoms (3rd–1st c. B.C.), deities of the Greek, Iranian and Indian pantheons were represented on coins of the Kushana empire (1st to 3rd century AD). These included four armed deities, such as Śiva. It is possible that depictions of a deity with multiple limbs, and those with four arms in particular, were influenced by such Indian sources. In a

<sup>36</sup> See *The Hymns of Orpheus*, trans. by Thomas Taylor (1792), University of Pennsylvania, 1999 and *Orphic Poems* (as in note 2), V. To Protopogonos, or the First Born, 199–120.

<sup>37</sup> Levi (as in note 12), figs. 4–6, 9–10, 17–18 & 20. Regarding a lion-headed statue from the mithreum at Ostia, see G. Zoega, *Bassorilievi antichi di Roma*, Rome, 1808, II, 32ff., who thought the figure to be Aion holding the key of generation, as described by Nonnus (5th c.): *Nonnus. Dionysiaca*, trans. by W.H.D. Rouse, Cambridge, Mass., 3 vols., 1940, reprint 1998, I, 7, 7ff.,

<sup>38</sup> Vermaseren, 1963 (as in note 33), fig. 29. This figure appears in the *Corpus Inscriptionum et Monumentorum Religionis Mithriacae* (or *CIMRM*), a two volume collection of inscriptions and monuments relating primarily to the Mithraic Mysteries, compiled by Maarten Jozef Vermaseren, the Hague, 1956, 1960, mon. 326, figs. 89 & 90.

<sup>39</sup> See H.G. Rawlinson, “Early Contacts between India and Europe,” in A.L. Basham, *A Cultural History of India*, Oxford, 1975, 425–41, esp. 435–37.

study of the multiplicity convention in Indian images of the divine, Doris Meth Srinivasan has shown that this multiplicity is linked to concepts of cosmic creation, "a paradigmatic form that mimics human parturition on a grand scale".<sup>40</sup> The number four symbolically conveys union, propagation and completeness, as in the four directions of the world, and the arms carrying attributes (e.g. the keys) are connected with notions of lordship and sovereignty.<sup>41</sup> We might assume that the multiple arms of the late antique syncretistic time deity were meant to identify him as both cosmic creator and divine sovereign, in keeping with conceptions reviewed above of Phanes, Chronos or Aion as first-born, the primordial source out of which other cosmic elements were born, and generator of the cosmic egg.

### *Time and Solar Symbolism*

How early was the conception of time associated with the sun? Surely from time immemorial. Evidence exists from at least the fourth millennium B.C., when sundials were the only time indicators. Sundials were still commonly used by the Greeks and Romans even when new tools of time measurement, such as the clepsydra, were introduced.<sup>42</sup> The inherent connection between the sun's motion and empirical time must have been imbued in the consciousness of people whose life rhythm was governed by natural phenomena rather than by mechanical time pieces.

The sun was first conceived as a supreme eternal god under the influence of oriental religions. The origins of the leontocephaline, and associated personifications allied to the concept of eternity, have been traced by scholars to Egypt. The phoenix first appeared on Roman coins struck in Egypt and retained its solar and temporal significance within the framework of classical iconography. Egyptian obelisks were imported into Rome together with their solar connotations. The development of the sun cult was directly subject to Syrian influences from the early third century, when under the imperial reign of Elagabal, high-priest of the Syrian sun-god, the

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<sup>40</sup> Doris Meth Srinivasan, *Many Heads, Arms and Eyes; Origin, Meaning and Form of Multiplicity in Indian Art*, Leiden, New York, Köln, 1997, quote from p. 21.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 162, 167–68. Srinivasan recognized that the multiplicity convention that proliferated in India was also adopted elsewhere, but noted that "the deities of other ancient cultures are usually not major gods in their respective religious contexts", *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>42</sup> See J.H. Breasted "The Beginnings of Time-Measurement and the Origins of our Calendar," in *Time and Its Mysteries*, New York, 1936, 59–96.



cult of *Sol-Invictus* became prominent in Rome.<sup>43</sup> This cult contributed to the conception of a supreme solar deity in Rome and ultimately laid the foundation for the official monotheistic worship of *Deus Sol Invictus* under Aurelian (from 274 A.D.). Although representations of the solar disc and sun chariot attest to the existence of sun cults in Greece from prehistoric times, the association of the concept of *Aion* with solar images does not appear to have preceded the second century.

Roelof Van den Broek, in his exemplary study of the phoenix myth, has shown that this bird was a classical symbol of the sun and renewal of time, associated as such with the concepts of eternity, rebirth, resurrection and the immortality of the soul.<sup>44</sup> It appeared with a radiate nimbus or standing on a globe, on second century imperial coins from the reigns of Marcus Aurelius, Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, accompanied by the legend *Aion*, *Saeculum Aureum* or *Aeternitas*.<sup>45</sup> The phoenix, generally with radiate nimbus, would accompany similar legends on imperial coins until the fourth century. The mythical bird was still popular in the Near Eastern art of later centuries, as seen in a Roman mosaic from Antioch (6th c., Louvre), which may be related to the rise of Neoplatonic philosophy from the third and fourth centuries AD.

An allegorical depiction of the legend *Aeternitas* on an earlier coin from Vespasian's reign (75–79 A.D.) features a female personification holding heads of the sun and moon.<sup>46</sup> According to Syrian astrological beliefs originating in Chaldean astrology and later diffused in the Roman Empire, the sun was supreme cosmological master and ruler.<sup>47</sup> Similar representations of the sun and moon, and the sphere or globe, with or without the zodiacal band, would be continually reproduced on Roman coins thereafter to express heliocentric concepts.

The heliocentric concepts that crystallized with late classical syncretism were summarized by Macrobius in the *Saturnalia* (5th c.).<sup>48</sup> Provid-

<sup>43</sup> See G.H. Halsberghe, *The Cult of Sol Invictus*, Leiden, 1972, 122–129.

<sup>44</sup> See Roelof Van den Broek, *The Myth of the Phoenix, According to Classical and Early Christian Traditions*, trans. I. Seeger, Leiden, 1972.

<sup>45</sup> Levi (as in note 12), 19–20, 295, figs. 19a & 19e.

<sup>46</sup> Stevenson, Smith & Madden (as in note 19), 22–25.

<sup>47</sup> See Franz Cumont, *Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, 1956, 129–34, 258, notes 79 & 80. Cicero (*Somnium Scipionis*), referred to *Sol dux et princeps* and as *mens mundi et temperatio*. Pliny (*Hist. nat.*, II, 6, 12) wrote: *Sol siderum ipsorum caelique rector. Hunc esse mundi totius animam ac planius mentem, hunc principale naturae regimem ac numen credere decet.* . . . Varro (*De re rust.* I, 1, 5) described the prominence of Sol and Luna among the Roman divinities *quorum tempora observantur cum quadam seruntur et conduntur*.

<sup>48</sup> Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius (395–423 A.D.), *Saturnalia* (as in note 28).

ing insight into an allegorical method based on Neoplatonist philosophy, the *Saturnalia* became an invaluable link between pagan antiquity and Christianity. Many of the classical conceptions and symbols of time were transmitted by Macrobius in his effort to demonstrate that the apparent worship of many gods is actually worship of the sun deity in the manifold aspects of his solar power.<sup>49</sup> Sol, the everlasting source of life, was identified with *Janus Pater*, "Janus the Father", god of creation.<sup>50</sup> The context was traditional, but the use of anthropomorphic metaphors to describe the characteristics of the sun would be adopted in medieval allegory, providing a link to the Renaissance image of Time. The sun in its passage was compared at its height to youth and in its depth to old age. The ages of man provided similes for the state of the sun during the four seasons.<sup>51</sup> The latter parallel was a product of cyclic theories regarding cosmic renewal that were prominent in Orphic and Stoic belief and were expounded by Seneca, Virgil and Ovid.<sup>52</sup> It is noteworthy that the artistic characterization of classical seasons was based on attributes, not on literary analogies to the human life-cycle. The artistic association between the ages of man and the four seasons would not become popular before the Renaissance of the fifteenth century.

Analogies drawn by Macrobius between ages and seasons, or cosmic quarters and solar equinoxes and solstices, anticipate systematic cosmic theories that were founded on principles of macrocosmic and microcosmic affinity. This arrangement of structures and phenomena in parallel categories of equal number, and the resulting abstraction of the number itself as a symbol of inherent unity, was a method transmitted to medieval scholars largely through Neoplatonist literature.

Among the eclectic interpretations of time symbols found in the *Saturnalia* was that of the serpent, which we have already noted in the iconography of *Phanes*, *Aion*, and the lion-headed deity identified with *Chronos/Kronos*. As a solar symbol it was explained in two traditional ways: the sinuous movement of the serpent resembled that of the sun, while the shedding of its skin signified renewal.<sup>53</sup> Macrobius further noted that the serpent was an attribute of *Aesculapius* and *Salus*, the gods of

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 17, 2-4.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 17, 35 & 42.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 17, 42 & I, 18, 10. Regarding the analogy between the four ages of man and seasons, see E. Sears, *The Ages of Man*, Princeton, 1986, 9-16.

<sup>52</sup> See K.F. Smith, "Ages of the World", in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. I, New York, 1951, 192-200.

<sup>53</sup> *Saturnalia*, (as in note 28) I, 17, 66-70 & I, 20, 1-2, 57-58, 69.

healing “because these two deities enable human bodies, as it were, to slough off the skin of weakness and to recover the bloom of their former strength, just as serpents each year shed the skin of old age and renew their youth”.<sup>54</sup> Although Macrobius assigned the serpent biting its tail to Janus, as a cyclic image of the universe, his North African contemporary, Martianus Capella, attributed this symbol to Saturn and interpreted it as the year.<sup>55</sup> The fact that the same image could symbolize either the universe or the year shows how dependent the concept of time still was upon ideas of cosmic revolution. In other words, time and space were inextricably inter-dependent. Movement and change, traditionally linked to the concept of time, were manifested, according to Macrobius, in the image of the solar chariot, for *Sol temporis auctor* (the sun is the cause or creator of time).<sup>56</sup> One can easily visualize the picture of temporal flux as Time, following in the wake of the solar chariot, as Petrarch did when he wrote: *che quant’io vidi il tempo andar leggero dopo la guida sua che mai non posa, io nol diro perche poter non spero. La guida sua* is the solar chariot described in the *Trionfo del Tempo* and the parallel imagery is not surprising if we recall that the *Saturnalia* was well known to Petrarch in the *Trecento*.<sup>57</sup>

Another description from the *Saturnalia* that would often be illustrated in the Renaissance is the three-headed monster of *Serapis*. According to Macrobius this hybrid creature depicted in Roman sculpture signified tripartite time.<sup>58</sup> Petrarch later referred to the tricephalous monster as an allegory of the flight of time—*fugientia tempora signant*.<sup>59</sup> Italian artists from the fourteenth century on, who depicted the Holy Trinity in a triple-headed personification, were probably familiar with the Augustinian interpretation that denoted the three parts of time as a vestige of the Trinity. We will see, however, that the three-headed monster was

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 20, 1–2, trans. Davies, 1969.

<sup>55</sup> *De nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*, I, 70. This allegorical work was first printed in Vicenza, 1499. See Martianus Capella, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, trans. William H. Stahl, R. Johnson & E.L. Burge, New York, 1977.

<sup>56</sup> *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, ch. XXI, trans. William H. Stahl, New York, 1952.

<sup>57</sup> “How swiftly time before my eyes rushed on after the guiding sun that never rests.” Petrarch, *Trionfo del Tempo*, lines 46–48, trans. E.H. Wilkins, *The Triumphs of Petrarch*, Chicago, 1962, 95. See P. De Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l’humanisme*, Paris, 1965, 129.

<sup>58</sup> *Saturnalia* (as in note 28), I, 20.

<sup>59</sup> *Africa*, III, 162ff. The *editio princeps* of the *Africa* was first published and printed, as part of Petrarch’s collected works (*Opera omnia*), Venice, 1501. The only complete English edition is *Petrarch’s Africa* translated and annotated by Thomas G. Bergin and Alice S. Wilson, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1977.

never adopted by illustrators of Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo*. Contrary to Panofsky's classical interpretation, furthermore, I have argued elsewhere that the combination of three animal heads conveyed an entirely different meaning in Italian Renaissance art.<sup>60</sup>

### *Mithraic Time Imagery*

Scholars of Mithraic iconography have faced myriad obstacles in establishing criteria for the interpretation of Mithraic doctrine and ritual as represented in late Roman monuments.<sup>61</sup> The present brief summary of time images in Mithraic iconography will not confront the controversial questions of origins and sources but aims to examine the connotations of its imagery in the context of late Roman iconography and subsequently in the Renaissance.

Nowhere in the art of the classical world were the interrelations of time and space elaborated as in the Mithreum. Mithras, the hero of the ritual bull-slaying scene, or tauroctony (Fig. 7), was worshipped as a god of light whose intimate association with the sun-god was often illustrated within the frame of the central depiction. Frequently accompanied by *Sol* and *Luna* on chariots, wind gods in medallions, and busts of the four seasons, Mithra also had a raven—conceived as a sun bird, related in classical myths to the phoenix, and like it connected to resurrection and the renewal of time. These motifs were sometimes accompanied by symbols of the four seasons or personifications of the seven planets as tutelary divinities of the week. Two supporting figures, the torch bearing *Cautes* and *Cautopates*, also bore temporal connotations. Most of the time motifs in Mithraic art are celestial and seem to reflect astronomical observation as well as astrological beliefs.<sup>62</sup> The importance of the celestial motifs lies in their direct association with time reckoning and the prediction of recurrent phenomena. The signs of the zodiac arranged in a half circle above the tauroctony scene represented the heavens. In some Mithrea signs of the zodiac, arranged in a circle, decorated the walls to identify

<sup>60</sup> See Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, New York, 1955, 146–68 and Simona Cohen, "Titian's London Allegory and the Three Beasts of his *Selva Oscura*," in *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*, Leiden, 2008, 165–93.

<sup>61</sup> See J.R. Hinnels (ed.), *Mithraic Studies*, 1975, introduction; Roger Beck, *Beck on Mithraism: Collected Works with New Essays*, Aldershot (GB) & Burlington (VT), 2004.

<sup>62</sup> See W. Lentz, "Mithraic Sanctuaries and Representations," in Hinnels (as above), II, 358–77.





Fig. 7. Tauroctony of Mithras, marble relief from Sidon, 2nd c., Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: RMN.

the Mithreum as a replica of the cosmos. Campbell noted that there were two different representational traditions.<sup>63</sup> The eastern traditions portrayed the zodiacal signs in a counterclockwise direction, the explanation being that there were differences in actual observation. This provides further evidence that the zodiacal signs depicted in Mithraic iconography reflected astronomical observation. Later the zodiac became an independent symbol of everlasting cyclic time that could be adopted in diverse contexts, comparable as such to the wheel of time associated with *Aion* and *Phanes*.

The central function of the sun in the Mithraic myths is illustrated by paintings and reliefs in the Mithrea. Sol and Luna appear in the upper corners. There are fifteen known scenes in which depicted rays, emanating from Sol's nimbus, penetrate the cave and reach Mithras.<sup>64</sup> The fact that these rays reflect actual practices involving light beams focused on the scene testifies to the causal position of the sun there. According to most

<sup>63</sup> L.A. Campbell, *Mithraic Iconography and Ideology*, Leiden, 1968, 47–49.

<sup>64</sup> See Lentz (as in note 62), 371ff.

interpretations, the theme of the Mithraic bull-slaying scene signifies the release of new life through sacrifice by means of a solar emissary.<sup>65</sup>

It has been demonstrated that the ritual sacrifice takes place within a significant space and time context. The divisions of time are represented by the juxtapositions of *Sol* and *Luna* (day and night) and *Cautes* and *Cautopates* (the dawn and dusk of life?),<sup>66</sup> and by signs of the zodiac (annual solar divisions), and the planets. Why was it so important to depict the divisions of time? Perhaps the answer lies with the lion-headed figure, referred to above, that was painted or carved above the zodiacal band. According to one interpretation, this personification of the eternal god (a conflation of the Persian *Zervan* with the Greek *Chronos/Kronos*), would conceivably define the relationship between Time and Eternity.

How was the message of new life, or everlasting after-life of the Mithraic initiate conveyed? The Mithraic leontocephaline was not depicted within the cosmic space, but above or beyond it; mortality belonged to the sphere of time and space but immortality was realized beyond their limits. In this figure, however, the individual symbols of time were incorporated and fused into one, an indication that this deity was conceived as ruler of time itself. It is possible that in this synthesis no differentiation was made between two possible interpretations of Eternity—eternity as timelessness and, by contrast, as the everlasting duration of time. The god of Eternity, beyond temporality, ruled time in its everlasting (cyclic) aspect. If men conceived of time as the moving image of eternity, they could use the former to define the later.

These images, however, were not accessible to the early Renaissance. There is no evidence of Mithraic sculpture in *Quattrocento* collections and, although the bull-slaying scene was ubiquitous in subterranean Mithrea throughout Italy, most of the remnants were interred in earth and rubble and had yet to be excavated.<sup>67</sup> Late classical and early Christian

<sup>65</sup> See Cumont (as in note 47), 135–37; Hinnells (as in note 61), II, 290–312.

<sup>66</sup> See Cumont, 1956 (as in note 47), 129; Campbell (as in note 63), 29–43; M. Schwartz, “Cautes and Cautopates, the Mithraic Torchbearers,” in Hinnells (as in note 61), II, 406–23.

<sup>67</sup> M.J. Vermaseren, *The Excavations in the Mithraeum of the Church of Santa Prisca in Rome*, Leiden, 1965, 115, claimed: “The ground-plan. . . . shows clearly that the presbytery of the Church lies over the ante-Room V of the Mithraeum and that the apse covers the first part of the main hall W, including the niches of *Cautes* and *Cautopates*. One cannot fail to see the symbolism of this arrangement, which expresses in concrete terms that Christ keeps Mithras ‘under’. The same also applies at S. Clemente.” Alternatively, it has been suggested that the mithrea were probably filled with rubble before construction of the church.

texts transmitted what Richard Gordon has called “a muddled idea of the cult of Mithras in Achaemenid and Sassanid Iran and of the Roman mysteries”, but mythologists of the High Renaissance still had no idea of the god’s actual image. Interest in late classical Mithraic iconography, with its sidereal and temporal symbolism, was first inspired in mid *Cinquecento* Rome by newly excavated reliefs of the tauroctony scene. When a print of the Mithraic bull-slaying relief was published in Antonio Lafreri’s *Speculum romanae magnificentiae* (1564) in post-Tridentine Italy, when pagan mythology became unacceptable, it was invested with an ethical interpretation of the farmer’s labor and the agricultural year.<sup>68</sup> Even then the mythological identity of the bull-slaying imagery was not recognized and the scene was continually interpreted as an allegory of agricultural fecundity until the seventeenth century.<sup>69</sup>

### Saturn

*Saturn*, as the god of time, was a late Roman invention. Like other mythological deities, he came to personify a force of nature and, as Cicero explained: “By Saturn they mean that which comprises the course and revolution of times and seasons; the Greek name for which Deity implies as much, for he is called [Greek: *Kronos*,] which is the same with [Greek: *Chronos*], that is, a space of time”.<sup>70</sup> By the fourth and fifth centuries the identification of *Kronos* with *Chronos* brought about a reinterpretation of the traditional *Kronos-Saturn* myth in terms of established time concepts.<sup>71</sup> According to Macrobius, for example, the myth of Saturn’s birth from *Ouranos* (Heaven), the subsequent castration of the latter, and the creation from his seed of Venus, the source of everlasting generation, denote the emanation of time from heaven and the activation of everlasting

<sup>68</sup> An excellent study of this subject is Richard Gordon’s, “Interpreting Mithras in the Late Renaissance” (as in note 32).

<sup>69</sup> *Op. cit.*, 24–28.

<sup>70</sup> *Saturnem autem eum esse voluerunt qui cursum et conversionem spatiorum ac temporum contineret; qui deus Graece id ipsum nomen habet: Kronos enim dicatur, qui est Chronos, id est spatium temporis.* Cicero, *De natura deorum*, II, XXV. English trans. by Charles Duke Yonge, New York, 1977. Cf. Plutarch, *Moralia*, 363, D32.

<sup>71</sup> For Saturn in the ancient and medieval literary and pictorial traditions, see Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, New York, 1964, 127–209; on aged Saturn-Kronos, esp. 144, 160–61, 166, 181, 208; on the Christian association of Saturn with time, esp. 177–78, 201, 207–209; on Saturn and time in humanism, esp. 212–214.

generation by means of time.<sup>72</sup> Echoing Plato's concept, he claimed that the intervention of time came after the universe had been created.

The conception of time as a destructive force, promoted by late Roman authors, was popularly conveyed to later generations primarily through the last chapter of Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, if not by the leitmotif of mutability and caducity that permeates the entire book. Publius Ovidius Naso (43 B.C.–17 A.D.) dwelt on the tragedy of human transience determined by the everlasting temporal cycle, illustrating the theme by examples of power and beauty destroyed by time. The climax of the passage is the famous invective against time, metaphorically described as the devourer:

*Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas,  
omnia destruitis vitiaque dentibus aevi paulatim lenta  
consumitis omnia morte.*

(Time the devourer, and the jealous years that pass, destroy all things, and nibbling them away, consume them gradually in a lingering death.)<sup>73</sup>

This poetic image of cruel Time, the cause of deterioration, transience and ultimate decay, marks a turning point in the literary approach to time. Ovid's time is not just a dimension of cosmic revolution but also a fundamental dimension of human existence—a vision of time unprecedented in Greek and early Roman writings. Change does not occur in time, in the Aristotelian sense, but time itself is the cause and instrument of metamorphosis.

Epicureanism encouraged the awareness of man's temporality by asserting that death involved total annihilation. Fleeting time, the brevity of life's pleasures and impending death are leitmotifs in Horace's poetry.<sup>74</sup> Similar reflections appeared in the letters of Seneca, although they led him to quite different conclusions.<sup>75</sup> It was one step from the metaphoric descriptions of time as fleeting, devouring and snatching, to the actual personification of late antiquity. *Saturn*, who had already been associated with time, provided a ready made mould for this assailant. Saturn's sickle, which had long ago ceased to be, or may never have been, an agricultural implement, was conveniently transmitted to time as a weapon of destruction

<sup>72</sup> *Saturnalia* (as in note 28), I, 8, 6–8.

<sup>73</sup> Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XV, lines 229–33. English trans. Mary M. Inness, Harmondsworth, (1955), repr. 1974, 341.

<sup>74</sup> Horace, *Odes*, Bk. I, IV, 15; IX, 13; XXVIII, 15; Bk. II, III, 14, 25; XI, 5; XXIX, 42; Bk. IV, IV, VII, 7–17: *Epode* XIII.

<sup>75</sup> Seneca, *Ad Lucilius*, I, 2, 5: *Ep.* XLIX.





Fig. 8. [COL. PL. 2] *Saturn with a Sickle*, fresco, Pompei, House of the Dioscuri, 1st c.. Photo: Luigi Spina, @ Soprintendenza per I Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei.

(Fig. 8). The sickle had been a standard weapon for the amputation of monsters in Greek mythology,<sup>76</sup> and Saturn's weapon may have derived from Babylonian–Assyrian artistic depictions of god attacking their foes. It is not surprising to find Saturn's weapon thus reinterpreted by Macrobius, probably on the basis of some earlier source:

*Falcem ei quidam aestimat attributam,  
Quod tempus omnia metat exsecet et incidat.*

(As for the god's attribute of a sickle, it is held by some to indicate that time reaps, cuts off, and cuts all things short).<sup>77</sup>

### Janus

Another deity of time described in the *Saturnalia* was *Janus*, the Roman god of doors (*ianuae*) and thus guardian of entrances and exits, beginnings and ends, past and future, East and West. Here again the concepts of space and time are interrelated. Macrobius explains that *Janus* is two-faced *quidam ideo eum dici bifrontem putant, quod et praeterita scriberit et future providerit*.<sup>78</sup> Roman imperial coins usually depicted Janus as two-faced (Fig. 9), while arches dedicated to him had either two or four entrances (e.g. the 3rd c. *quadrifons* arch on the *Ianiculum*), signifying the multiple directions of his vision.<sup>79</sup> The four-faced deity was known as *Janus Geminus*. As the manifestation of the sun, the twin faces suggest the beginning (sunrise) and the end (sunset) of the day.<sup>80</sup> Janus was invoked as god of the morning, the first day of each month, and the first month of the solar year. However, his dominion expanded from specific periods of time to time in general. He was then called *temporis et aevi deus* (god of time and age/eternity) by Pliny, *temporis auctor* (the author of time) by Nemesian, and *annorum sator* (sower of the years) by Martial.<sup>81</sup> Ovid described *Janus* as very old, having come into being with the creation of the world, with a long beard, leaning on a walking stick and carrying a key.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>76</sup> For literary sources and ancient illustrations of this subject, see M.L. West, *Hesiod, Theogony*, Oxford, 1966, 175, 217–18.

<sup>77</sup> *Saturnalia*, I, 8, 8; trans. Davies (as in note 28), 65.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 4.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 13; Cf. Ovid, *Fasti*, I, 133–144.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 9, 9.

<sup>81</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Hist. nat.*, XXXIV, 33; Nemesian, *Cynegeticus* 104; Martial, Book X, epigr. 28, 1.

<sup>82</sup> Ovid, *Fasti*, I, lines 89–254 & 259.



Fig. 9. *Janus Bifrons*, silver didrachm from Rome or South Italy, diam. 24mm., 225–212 B.C., Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.



Fig. 10. Janus Temple on Sesterius of Nero, c. 67 A.D., reverse legend: PACE P[ER] TERRA MARIQ[UE] PARTA IANUM CLUSIT (The gates of Janus Temple are closed because peace is set on both land and sea).

In a poetic description by the epic poet Nonnus, written in Upper Egypt about four centuries later (early 5th c.), Time the “maniform”, the “ancient of days”, holds “the key of generation”, the “rudder of life” and the “helm of human fate”.<sup>83</sup> Greek and Roman images of *Janus* had been abundantly reproduced as a double headed bust, a herm or a full-figured deity, with one or more of these attributes. But by the fifth century individual attributes of *Aion*, *Janus* and *Saturn* were amalgamated to form an image of Time elevated to the status of supreme primeval force.

From the reign of Octavius Augustus Caesar, first emperor of the Roman Empire (43 B.C.–14 A.D.), the cult and symbols of Janus were adopted for political propaganda. The double doors of his temple in Rome stood open in times of war and were closed in times of peace; the latter form was depicted on coins from the first century on with legends that define it as a symbol of peaceful rule (Fig. 10). When Cosimo I de’ Medici identified himself with the image of Augustus in the mid sixteenth century, he was adopting this ready made propaganda, symbols of the Golden age and *Pax Romana*, but he further aggrandized his self image by borrowing the function of Janus as *temporis auctor*.

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<sup>83</sup> Nonnus, *Dionysiaca*, Bk.-VII, 25–38; trans. W.H.D. Rouse, London & Cambridge, Mass., 1956, 274. Online text: *Dionysiaca*, Bks.1–14, trans. Rouse. This was previously translated by Le Comte de Marcellus in 1856, repr. Eglinton, 1964.





### CHAPTER THREE

#### EARLY CHRISTIAN AND MEDIEVAL CONCEPTS OF TIME

Many of the speculations and theories of time set forth in medieval theological literature had no direct expression in the visual arts. The following chapter does not presume to present a comprehensive philosophical review but briefly points to some major theoretical sources in an attempt to demonstrate dialectical issues of time relevant to the imagery, or lack of it, in early Christian art.

##### *The Negation of Time in Early Christian Art*

The appropriation and assimilation of non-Christian symbols into Christian contexts during the first centuries of our era has been widely demonstrated and analyzed in the literature. During the same period, however, there is a conspicuous gap in the depiction of time, a seeming denial of the concretization of time that raises fundamental questions. How can we explain the disappearance of time symbols and personifications that were so prominent in classical art? Ecclesiasts pursued the questions of time and temporality, in theological, historical, eschatological and millenarian contexts, and dealt with time-calculation, primarily from the seventh and eighth centuries to establish church feasts (especially Easter), yet there were few artistic depictions of time or visual expressions of temporal duration in art during the first centuries of the Christian era.<sup>1</sup>

This question arose in regard to Karl Lehmann's influential article "The Dome of Heaven", in which he undertook to demonstrate that the theme of the Christian dome was derived from pre-Christian pagan types and

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<sup>1</sup> For a review of this subject, see Theodor H. Mommsen, "St. Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress," *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 1959, 265–98; regarding millenarianism: Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, London, 1964, 377–404; Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millenium*, London, 1962. On the theory of Cyclic return: Jean Daniélou, *Origène*, Paris, 1948 and *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, London & Philadelphia, 1973, 422–25, 476–86. Regarding the problem of dissociating Easter from the Jewish Passover and the place of computus texts in medieval astronomical literature, see Claudia Kren, "Astronomy," in D.L. Wagner (ed.), *The Seven Liberal Arts in the Middle Ages*, Bloomington, 1983, 218–49, esp. 231–32.

retained the cosmological content of Roman vault decoration.<sup>2</sup> Thomas Mathews, in his refutation of this theory, has shown that the sanctuary vault in San Vitale, Ravenna (6th c.), as the closest Early Christian parallel, does not reproduce the temporal imagery of Roman precedents.<sup>3</sup> In the center the lamb within a wreath, supported by four angels, replaces the sun god. He notes: “entirely missing from the program are the sun and the planets, the Hours, the astral divinities and the signs of the zodiac. The omissions turn out to be more important than the four supporting figures, which are of minor consequence in later medieval dome decoration”. The fact that the planets and signs of the zodiac were excluded in early Christian imagery has been related to the refutation of astrology and astral fatalism.<sup>4</sup> Bianca Kühnel has attributed the lack of temporal symbols to the identification between time and empire, and “the use of time in the Roman cult of state that at first caused Christians to stay away from any attempt to concretize time”.<sup>5</sup> She stressed that the aversion to dealings with the calculation of time was aroused by suspicion of pagan astrology. Although the Judeo-Christian apocalypse was anticipated at the end of the seventh millennium, mathematical calculations to determine the end of the world were not undertaken by either religious group. Such projections into the future involved measurements of time that were, in any case, beyond their capacities. But what was significant, as Lactantius already proclaimed in his *Divinae Institutiones* (303–11 A.D.), was that following the universal *ekpyrosis*, there would be “a new world, which would not be subject to astral influences and freed from dominion of time”.<sup>6</sup>

The re-cycling of the *cosmocrator* imagery, appropriated both from early Byzantine Jewish mosaics in Palestine (4th–6th c.) and Roman imperial iconography, for the early image of Christ, did include several symbols of eternal time.<sup>7</sup> From approximately the sixth century, depictions of the busts or signs of *Sol* and *Luna* and/or the letters *Alpha* and

<sup>2</sup> Karl Lehmann, “The Dome of Heaven,” *Art Bulletin*, vol. 29, 1945, 225–48.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas F. Mathews, “Convergence,” in *The Clash of Gods, A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art*, Princeton, 1999, 2003, 142–50.

<sup>4</sup> The conception of the stars as “signs” in Christian cosmology and their later depictions in monumental art is discussed in my chapter on the Romanesque zodiac.

<sup>5</sup> Bianca Kühnel, *The End of Time in the Order of Things, Science and Eschatology in Early Medieval Art*, Regensburg, 2003, 87–93.

<sup>6</sup> Lactantius, *The Divine Institutions*, Books 1–7, in *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 49, trans. M.F. McDonald, Wash. DC, 1965, VII, 17, 9. Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Cosmos and History*, trans. Willard R. Trask, Princeton, 1971.

<sup>7</sup> Kühnel (as in note 5), 45–48. 60–62; Regarding the appropriation of imperial imagery, see the classical work by André Grabar, *Christian Iconography, A Study of its Origins*,

*Omega*, established Christ, the *Pantocrator*, as embodiment of eternity and the End of Days.<sup>8</sup> We have seen that time symbols associated with pagan myth and ritual were largely based on the interrelated forms of repetitious movement, that is time defined by analogy to space, and cyclic periodicity (i.e. motions of the sun, moon, planets), which constituted the basis for time computation.<sup>9</sup> In his classic studies of myth and ritual Mircea Eliade attributed the well-known “cyclic” vision of time in ancient thought to belief in the “eternal return”. “This eternal return reveals an ontology uncontaminated by time and becoming” and “by conferring a cyclic direction upon time, annuls its irreversibility”, as demonstrated by the Greeks in their myth of eternal return.<sup>10</sup> According to Eliade’s concept, in *imitating* the exemplary acts of a god or of a mythical hero, or simply by recounting their adventures, the man of an archaic society detaches himself from profane time and magically re-enters the Great Time, the sacred time.<sup>11</sup> Eliade wrote of “the need of archaic societies to regenerate themselves periodically through the annulment of time”.<sup>12</sup>

Movement and process characterized the images both of time and eternity in pre-Judaeo/Christian thought and visualization. In other words, eternity was depicted as time that repeats itself endlessly, not as timelessness. The often repeated claim that cyclic images could not illustrate the Christian concepts of linear progression and irreversibility of time, although debated in some of the recent literature, has provided a basic argument for the rejection of pagan time imagery.<sup>13</sup> Early iconoclastic tendencies, based on the second commandment, have also been regarded as a factor in the avoidance of sacred imagery.

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Princeton, 1968, 41 and the dissenting approach of Mathews (as in note 3), “The Mistake of the Emperor Mystique,” 2003, 3–22.

<sup>8</sup> The term *Alpha* and *Omega* comes from the phrase “I am the *alpha* and the *omega*, the beginning and the end”, appellation of Jesus in the *Book of Revelation*, verses 1:8, 21:6, and 22:13.

<sup>9</sup> See Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, vol. II, New Haven, 1955, 71–139 and Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, (Bollington Foundation, 1949; 2nd edit. Princeton, 1968, part II: 261–68), 3rd edit. Princeton, 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Mircea Eliade (as in note 6), 89.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 34–35.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>13</sup> See Henri-Charles Peuch, “Gnosis and Time,” in Joseph Campbell (ed.), *Man and Time, Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks*, New York, 1959, 38–84; Arthur Hilary Armstrong & Robert A. Markus, “Time, History, Eternity,” in *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, London, 1960, 116–34; Constantinos A. Patrides, *The Phoenix and the Ladder*, Berkeley, 1964.; Arnaldo Momigliano, “Time in Ancient Historiography,” *History and Theory*, V, Beiheft 6, 1966, 1–23.



Typological themes that predominated in the art of the first centuries have been variously interpreted. On one hand, they are perceived to exemplify a non historical approach. The authority of past events expressed in Old Testament pre-figurations and their typological relationships to the stories of Christ did not reflect an historic attitude. The interrelation between the two testaments was neither causal nor evolutionary, and typological parallels have not been conceived by most modern scholars as manifestations of repetitive patterns. Christianity assumedly proclaimed the uniqueness of each event involving Christ. In typological constructs two events were extracted from their spatial and temporal contexts, the early events serving as prototypes for the later ones. The value of the *exemplum* lay in its symbolic significance, not in its historic function.

Nevertheless, Old Testament figures and events were the sacred archetypes (to use Eliade's term), or exemplary models, appropriated by early Christianity to invest its history with paradigmatic authority. It appears to me that Eliade's definition of "eternal return" as "a repetition, and consequently a re-actualization, of *illud tempus*", could also apply to the fundamental conception upon which these typological analogies were initiated, just as it underlies the origins of Christian liturgical ritual. Jean Leclercq indicating how sacred time absorbed and modified natural time in the early Middle Ages, recalled that the word *hora* was identified with a Divine Office (such as *hora matutinalis*). In his words: "there was a complete theology of time, considered as the sacrament which enabled a mystery accomplished long ago in the life of the savior to be mediated in the actuality of today (*hodie*), thus being renewed every time it was celebrated".<sup>14</sup>

It is commonly underlined, on the other hand, that time was real for Christianity and led in a straight line from the Creation (or Fall of Man) to final Redemption. Leopold D. Ettlinger has interpreted the "mystic correspondence between the two testaments", exemplified in the typology of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, as a new concept of history based on a progression from the Old dispensation to the New".<sup>15</sup> This interpretation, he stated, "was applied widely by Origen and Alexandrine Fathers to demonstrate the God-ordained course of history from the Creation to

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<sup>14</sup> Jean Leclercq, "Experience and Interpretation of Time in the Early Middle Ages," *Studies in Medieval Culture*, vol. 5, 1975, 9-19, esp. 12.

<sup>15</sup> Leopold D. Ettlinger, *The Sistine Chapel Before Michelangelo: Religious Imagery and Papal Primacy*, Oxford, 1965, 94-99.

the Salvation".<sup>16</sup> According to Ettlinger, the author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* wanted to stress that "Christianity superseded Judaism in all its institutions".

The ambivalence inherent in the early Christian theories, demonstrated in the related typological cycles and liturgical practice, reflects the conflict between two fundamental conceptions of time and history. We might note, in this regard, that theories of cycles and astral influences on human destiny and historical events were never entirely rejected and still dominated learned writings and popular belief throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance.<sup>17</sup>

### Nox intempesta—*The Problem of Defining Time*

The first methodical attempt of a Christian author to define time and eternity was that of St. Augustine (354–430). In the commentaries on *Genesis*, his *Confessions* and *De civitate dei*, he dealt with the theme as a fundamental theological problem of psychological and moral implications. Time, as the nucleus of Augustines's thought, was admittedly a source of perplexity and his definitions involved ambiguities and paradox that are beyond the sphere of this study.<sup>18</sup> Three interrelated issues were crucial: definitions of the nature of God and his creations based on the dichotomy between eternity and time; an interpretation of time based on psychic experience, and a theoretical framework for sacred and secular history. The dichotomy of time and eternity was based on multiplicity versus unity and motion as opposed to rest.<sup>19</sup> Eternity, he claimed, was totally present, while everything

<sup>16</sup> Ettlinger (as above), 94. Jean Daniélou, *Sacramentum Futuri: Études sur les origines de la typologie biblique*, Paris, 1950.

<sup>17</sup> Eliade (as in note 6), 143–45.

<sup>18</sup> See Henri-Irénée Marrou, *L'ambivalence du temps de l'histoire chez Saint Augustine*, Montreal, 1950; Catherine Rau, *Saint Augustine's Theory of Time*, Berkeley, 1952 and "Theories of Time in Ancient Philosophy," *The Philosophical Review*, 1953, 514–25; J.M. Quinn, *The concept of Time in Saint Augustine*, *Studia Ephemerialis Augustinianum*, no. 5, Patristic Institute, Rome, 1965; Maria Bettetini, "Augustine of Hippo and the Question of time, in Pasquale Porro (ed.), *The Medieval concept of Time; Studies in the Scholastic Debate and its Reception in Early Modern Philosophy*, Leiden, Boston, Köln, 2001, 33–56; J.M. Quinn, *A Companion to the Confessions of St. Augustine*, Frankfurt, 2002, 695–700; Marinus B. Pranger, "Augustine and the Return to the Senses," in Giselle de Nie, Kurt Frederick Morrison and Marco Mostert (eds.), *Seeing the Invisible in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Turnhout, 2005, 53–68, esp. 60–64.

<sup>19</sup> *Sermones*, CXVII, 10; Migne, P.L. XXXVIII & XXXIX.

temporal was in flux.<sup>20</sup> The eternal nature of God was incomparable to the nature of man.<sup>21</sup> In the attempt to define time as *distentio animi* (the distension of the soul/World Soul?), he tended to deny its existence.<sup>22</sup> The past no longer exists, the future is yet to be, and the present, if it be truly present, is eternity by virtue of its immobility.<sup>23</sup> To avoid the absurd conclusion that time can be affirmed only in its tendency to be dissolved, the three parts of time were relegated to the realm of psychic experience as memory, attention and expectation.<sup>24</sup> This temporal state in human consciousness, distracting man from contemplation of the divine, was to be transcended.<sup>25</sup> Augustine's mystical striving led him to deny the very meaning and value of time-bound phenomena. The question of the dependence of time on the soul or mind, which had concerned Aristotle, Plotinus and others in classical antiquity and occupied a central position in Augustine's doctrine, was further debated by medieval philosophers of nature, such as Albertus Magnus and Thomas of Aquinas.<sup>26</sup>

An ambivalent attitude towards time emerged in Augustine's historical theory. Sacred history demonstrated the temporal dispensation of divine providence.<sup>27</sup> Time was the medium of spiritual redemption. Yet historical time, taking its course along a straight path, *tramite recti itineris*, also encompassed the unfolding of human sin and tragedy.<sup>28</sup>

Boethius (ca. 480–524), like Augustine, sought to define divine eternity by contrast to temporality, but instead of his predecessor's dichotomy he applied the three stage hierarchy of Neoplatonist tradition. He could not define temporal present other than that which is passing: *in hodierna quoque vita non amplius vivitis quam in illo mobile transitorioque momento*.<sup>29</sup> The only true present was the immobile all-encompassing present state possessed by God, and man could emulate the divine present only by an encompassing mental vision which united past, present and future in a

<sup>20</sup> *Confessiones*, 11, 11, 13; Migne, *P.L.* XXXII, 660.

<sup>21</sup> *Conf.* 11.11.13.

<sup>22</sup> *Conf.* 11.26.28; 33; 37ff.

<sup>23</sup> *Conf.* 11.14.17.

<sup>24</sup> *Conf.* 11.20.26.

<sup>25</sup> *Conf.* 11.29.39.

<sup>26</sup> See J.J.A. Mooij, *Time and Mind, The History of a Philosophical Problem*, Leiden, 2005.

<sup>27</sup> *De vera religione* 7, Migne, *P.L.*, XXXIII.

<sup>28</sup> *De civitate dei*, I 9, Migne, *P.L.*, XLI, 9. Marrou (as in note 18); Robert A. Marcus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*, Cambridge, 1970; Jean Guitton, *Le temps et l'éternité chez Plotinus et Saint Augustine*, Paris, 1957.

<sup>29</sup> Boethius, *De consolazione philosophiae*, 6, 5 (101, 14–16). See Richard C. Dales, *Medieval Discussions of the Eternity of the World*, Leiden, 1990, esp. 15–16.

temporal instant. In the above examples, as in subsequent pre-medieval thought, man's present state was conceived to be a mere bridge between the lost past and the anticipated future.

Although an entirely different tradition than that of Augustine and Boethius was represented by Isidore, Bishop of Seville (ca. 560–636), his writings also reflect a negation of a time concept *per se*. As an eclectic compiler of pagan and Christian literary scholarship his writings were invaluable transmitters of a heritage that included Roman cosmology, thus forming the basis of early medieval astronomy and computistic literature that incorporated visual *schemata*. As such, it contained the seeds of ideas that would be sowed in the secular literature and art of the Middle Ages but would germinate during the Renaissance. Cosmic diagrams, or *rota* illustrations, based on concentric circles, with radial divisions that indicated astral, cosmographic and periodic concordances, were devised by Isidore as visual aids for his *Natura rerum*. These formal expressions of temporal durations, illustrating concordances between solar and lunar years, and between years, months and days, were later used to illustrate works by Macrobius, Bede, William of Conches and others.<sup>30</sup> The influence of these diagrams on figurative depictions of time in the early Renaissance will be examined in chapter six.

Isidore's chapters dealing with time in *De rerum natura* and especially the *Etymologiarum sive originum* provide insight into the prevalent conception of time. Isidore stated that time cannot be perceived *per se* but rather as a medium of human activity:

*Intempestum est medium et inactuosum noctis tempus,  
Quando agi nihil potest et omnia sopore quieta sunt.  
Nam tempus per se non intellegitur, nisi per actus humanos.  
Medium autem noctis actum caret. Ergo intempesta inactuosa,  
quasi sine tempore, hoc est sine actu, per quem dinoscitur tempus;  
unde est: 'Intempestive venisti'. Ergo intempesta dicitur  
quia caret tempora, id est actum.*<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> On Isidore of Seville and his contribution to the visualization of astronomical aspects of computistics, see Kühnel, (as in note 5), 93–95 & 166–36. For other discussions of the *rotae*, see Harry Bober, "An Illustrated Medieval School-Book of Bede's *De natura rerum*," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, vols. 19–20, 1956–57, 65–97; John E. Murdoch, *Album of Science: Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, New York, 1984, 52–61, and Susan E. Holbrook, "Picturing Time: Bartholomew's Encyclopedia on the Properties of Things," Gerhard Jaritz & Gerson Moreno-Riaño (eds.), *Time and Eternity, The Medieval Discourse*, Turnhout, 2003, 451–75.

<sup>31</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiarum sive originum*, Liber V: *De legibus et Temporibus*, 9–10. "9. The 'dead of night' (*intempestum*) is the middle and inactive time (*tempus*) of night, when nothing can be done and all things are at rest in sleep, for time is not perceived on its



The middle of the night was called *intempesta* (without time), because it lacks activity by which time is distinguished. The expression *nox intempesta* had been coined by the epic poet Ennius (239–169 B.C.), and was adopted by Roman authors, such as Virgil, Cicero, Seneca and Macrobius.<sup>32</sup> In its original classical context *nox intempesta* is generally understood to mean “the deepest night” or the period between dusk and dawn, but Isidore has explicitly defined it as a state without time. Since time could not be treated apart from motion, he merely listed the various time units by which duration is reckoned. Isidore’s chapter on time is representative of the pre-medieval attitude in that it that it neither preserves the speculative and analytical classical legacy nor develops an empirical approach of its own. Most curious is the fact that the eminent bishop ignored the relevant theological issues.

### *The Medieval Concretization of Time*

Along with the twelfth century revival of Greek philosophical and scientific sources and the fostering of a more critical, empirical approach, time emerged as an issue of theological debate. There were two leading schools of thought. Scholastics of the Aristotelian school held to his theory that time was a predicate of motion and had no existence *per se*. The question of the dependence of time on the soul or mind, which had been treated by Aristotle and others in classical antiquity and had occupied a central position in Augustine’s doctrine, was further argued by medieval theologians. Although absolute theorists conceived of time as an independent conceptual entity, the dividing lines were not always clear cut, as demonstrated by the dialectical syntheses of William of Okham and others.

Aristotle’s doctrines on time, which were carried on and widely debated by later philosophical schools in antiquity, highly influenced medieval

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own account, but by way of human activities, and the middle of the night lacks activity. 10. Therefore *intempesta* means “inactive,” as if it were ‘without time’ (*sine tempore*), that is, without the activity by which time is perceived. Whence the expression, “you have arrived ‘at an untimely moment’ (*intempestive*).” Hence the dead of night is so called because it lacks time, that is, activity.” Translation from: *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, edit. and trans. by Stephen A. Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach, & Oliver Berghof, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, 117–34, 2nd edit. 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Quintus Ennius, *Annalium liber*, Book I, 102 & 167; Virgil, *Georgics*, I, 231–251; Cicero, *Philippica* I, 12; Seneca, *Epistularum moralium ad Lucilium*, 8, 1; Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, I, 14.

philosophers and theologians, primarily after the rediscovery and translations of his texts. These had been translated from Greek to Arabic from the early eighth century, and greatly influenced Avicenna (11th c.) and Averroës (13th c.), whose works were later translated into Latin. The *Physics*, as well as other writings by Aristotle, was first translated from Greek by a scholar called Iacobus Veneticus Grecus (James of Venice, d. after 1147) and this was followed by several other translations from Greek and Arabic.<sup>33</sup>

In the mid thirteenth century a commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* was written by Albertus Magnus.<sup>34</sup> Shortly after, a ban on the teaching of Aristotle was lifted at the Sorbonne and was made compulsory in the faculty of arts. Robert Grotteste wrote the first commentaries on the *Physics* in Oxford at the same time.<sup>35</sup> Questions regarding the relationship between time and motion were continuously reexamined and debated in the context of the divine Creation and the origin of the world. Thomas of Aquinas (ca. 1224–1274) based his questions regarding God's eternity on the supposition that the nature of eternity can be comprehended by comparison with that of time, although time and eternity were conceived in Augustinian rather than Platonic terms, as mutually exclusive. He agreed with Boethius' conception of God's eternity, despite arguments with the latter's terminology, and managed to synthesize it with Aristotle's definition of time as a function of motion: ... *nihil aliud est quam numerus motus secundum prius et posteribus*.<sup>36</sup> Thomas called time *mensura motus* and eternity *mensura esse*. As past and future were non-existent he sought, like Aristotle, to define the 'now', assimilating the idea that 'now' was only a limit dividing before and after, and concluding that time was a fundamental measure independent of all passing events. He conceived of time not as a process but as an independent measure of the all processes, differentiating that which measures (time) from that which is being

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<sup>33</sup> See Bernard G. Dod "Aristoteles latinus." In *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg (eds.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982 and Marie-Therese D'Alverny, "Translations and Translators." in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson, Giles Constable with Carol D. Lanham. Toronto: University of Toronto Press in association with the Medieval Academy of America, 1982, 1991.

<sup>34</sup> See Henryk Anzulewicz, "Aeternitas-Aevum-Tempus: The concept of Time in the System of Albert the Great," in Porro (as in note 18), 83–129.

<sup>35</sup> See Mooij (as in note 26), chap. VI, esp. 84–87.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas of Aquinas, *Summa Theologia*, Ia 10, art.1. For Latin with English translation, see *Summa Theologia*, trans. T. Dermott, London & New York, 1963, vol. II.

measured.<sup>37</sup> He thereby diverged from the legacy of the church Fathers, particularly from the introspective and metaphysical approach of Augustine. Thomas could define time in concrete terms: it had a basic unity derived from the unity of the prime motion, but as a measure it could be divided into parts, it could measure only those things with beginnings and ends and could even measure rest in that which is potentially but not actually in motion.<sup>38</sup>

In another scholastic work, *De rerum principio*, traditionally attributed to John Duns Scotus (ca. 1265–1308) and more recently to the Franciscan Cardinal Vital du Four (Vitalis de Furno, ca. 1265–1308), time is postulated as a conceptual reality.<sup>39</sup> While time and motion refer to the same material reality, they are not to be totally identified.<sup>40</sup> This ecclesiast concluded that time and motion are objectively (*in re*) identical, but conceptually (*formali ratione*) diverse. The formal aspect of time, which is time in the truest sense, depends on and exists in the mind.<sup>41</sup> But his conception of time *in anima* is different from Augustine's in that he indicated an abstract reality rather than a subjective delusion. Contrary to Aristotle and Augustine, who tended to negate the objective existence of time because past, present and future do not exist, the author of *De Rerum Principio* assumed that the very notion of these parts distinguishes time from motion. And since time was less real than motion, it could be compared with the universal concept.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> *Summa Theologia*, 1a, 10, 6: "The true ground of time's unity is therefore the unity of the most fundamental process in the world, by which—since it is the simplest—all other processes are measured, as Aristotle says. Time is not only the measure of this process, but also an accident of it, and so receives unity from it. But time is nearly a measure of other processes, and so is not diversified, for one measure, when independently existent, can measure many things." Trans. T. McDermott, 1963, 145–47.

<sup>38</sup> *Summa Theologia*, 1a, 10, 4; Cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, IV, 11, 219a, 23–30; 12, 221b, 28 & *Physics* IV, 12, 221 b, 7–12.

<sup>39</sup> Regarding the debates on time around 1300, see Mooij (as in note 26), chap. VIII, 92–103.

<sup>40</sup> *Motus et tempus non dicunt diversas res absolutas sicut quatitas et qualitas ei inhaerens, sed omnino dicunt eandem secundum diversas rationes denominatam aliquando tempus, aliquando motus.* *De Rerum Principio*, XVIII, art. 1, n. 4, in J. Duns scotts, *Opera Omnia*, Hildesheim, 1968, vol.III.

<sup>41</sup> *Alii dicunt magis realiter, ut credo quod tempus sit idem re quod motus, differens formali ratione, per quam rationem vocatur vere tempus; secundum suum esse materiale est in rebus extra, secundum suam vero rationem formalem est ab anima et est in ea.* *De Rerum Principio*, XVIII. art. 1, n. 16.

<sup>42</sup> *Ex hoc patet quod tempus habet debilius esse quam motus, quia minus reale; et sic patet quod tempus esse materiale habet in re, formale vero ab anima et in anima. Et haec est natura universalis cujus realitas est in re, sed ratio, formalis ab intellectu abstrahente.* *De Rerum Principio*, XVIII. art. 1, n. 32.

An opposing stand to such theories of universal concepts was taken by the Franciscan friar and philosopher William of Ockham (ca. 1300–1349) who introduced an empirical trend in an effort to accord presuppositions of Aristotelian physics with Christian theology. The abstract reality of time as a *res fluens* or *forma fluens* outside of the mind was, it seems, a popular enough concept in the early fourteenth century to warrant a systematic refutation in his *Summa philosophia naturalis*.<sup>43</sup> His definition followed and expanded upon that of Aristotle. The reliability of time as a measure of motion depended on the constancy and uniformity of an ultimate standard to which the measure may be referred.<sup>44</sup> However, he doubted the absolute accuracy of the rotation of the sphere as a standard for all other motions and for time computation, granting that the solar and other planetary motions served as a normative standard for lack of a more precise reference.<sup>45</sup> As no fixed, absolutely immobile reference point existed, there could be no absolute measurement. This demand for precision in measurement marks the beginning of a quantitative approach to time.

The preceding discussion has merely touched upon some representative examples in order to illustrate orientations of medieval speculation on time. During the initial period, roughly between the fifth and the twelfth century, there was a tendency to define time in self-negating terms. As an element of cognition, time was said to illustrate transience and delusion and was opposed to divine perpetuity. Controversies arose in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when, alongside the Aristotelian revival, time was increasingly perceived in terms of the natural world and, consequently, was divorced from the issue of eternity. Ultimately, this led to the formulation of an independent time dimension, which could be abstracted from events and precisely calculated.

### *Technology, Society and the Clock*

In an attempt to study “the experience of time”, Jean Leclercq concluded that “medieval time does not appear primarily as an objective reality,

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<sup>43</sup> *Philosophia naturalis sive Summulae in libros Physicorum*, London, 1963, IV, 1, 2 & 10. See Herman Shapiro, *Motion, Time and Place According to William of Ockham*, New York, 1957, 91–112 and Gabriella Galbiati, “Ockham’s *Philosophia naturalis* and *Quaestiones in libros physicorum*, in the Light of Prior’s *Tense Logic*,” *Metalogicon*, vol. XX, I, 2007, 27–38; Alessandro Ghisalberti, “Categories of Temporality in William Okham and John Buridan,” in Porro (as in note 18), 255–86, esp. 262–63.

<sup>44</sup> *Philosophia naturalis* (as above), part III, ch. vii.

<sup>45</sup> *Philosophia naturalis* (as above), part IV, ch. vii.



exterior to man, or as an absolute to which man's situation is relative", rather "time was relative to man, to a succession of men; its value came from the use man made of it".<sup>46</sup> This subjective approach has been illustrated above in the reasoning of St. Augustine and Isidore of Seville, the first arguing for the existence of time only in human cognition; the second concluding that time cannot be perceived *per se*, but only as a medium of human activity.<sup>47</sup> Human time had always been measured by the cyclic but uneven rhythms of nature.

Transformations in the conceptions of time and space, concurrent with the advancement of a secular theory of time, have been linked to socio-economic changes in medieval society during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These issues were brought to the fore in the 1960s and 70s by the *École des Annales* that promoted collaboration between history and the social sciences, particularly in the studies of prominent scholars, such as, Lewis Mumford, Charles Singer, Lynn White Jr., Jean Gimpel, Carlo Cipolla and Jacques LeGoff.<sup>48</sup> Accelerated technological advances between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, a by-product of the rising mercantile economy, were perceived as factors in the transformation of traditional concepts of time and space. Correspondences between the history of temporal ideas and that of chronometer technology during this period were adduced to illustrate the link between thought and practice.<sup>49</sup>

Prior to the thirteenth century the sundial and *clepsydra* (water-clock) were the most common European chronometers. They were imprecise and often technically impractical. By the late twelfth century the water-clock market had grown large enough to warrant a guild in Cologne.

<sup>46</sup> Leclercq (as in note 14), 13.

<sup>47</sup> *Intempestum est medium at inactuosum noctis tempus, Nam tempus per se non intellegitur, nisi per actus humanos*, Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum sive originum* (as in note 31).

<sup>48</sup> Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, New York, 1934, repr. 1963; H.A. Loyd, "Mechanical Time Keepers," in Charles Singer et al., *A History of Technology*, vol. III, (Oxford, 1953, 1957), 1964, 648–75; Lynn White Jr., *Medieval Technology and Social Change*, Oxford 1964, 119–29; Jean Gimpel, *The Medieval Machine; The Industrial Revolution of the Middle Ages*, 1976, 2nd edit., London, 2003; Carlo M. Cipolla, *Clocks and Culture, 1300–1700*, New York, 1978; Jacques LeGoff, *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages*, Chicago & London, 1980 (trans. of *Pour un autre Moyen Âge*, Paris, 1977), esp.29–42.

<sup>49</sup> For the history of the mechanical clock and clock technology, see the above sources, and the more recent, comprehensive study: Rachel Doggett, Susan Jaskot & Robert Rand (eds.), *Time, the Greatest Innovator, Timekeeping and Time Consciousness in Early Modern Europe*, Exhibition at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Wash. DC, 1986, esp. Silvio A. Bedini, "The Map of Time," 11–23.

While Thomas of Aquinas was defining time as a unified measure of concrete reality, technicians were working on the problem of a weight driven escapement to overcome the limitations of water and mercury driven clocks. Just when Thomas was establishing a synthesis between Aristotelian and Christian time, the mechanical clock first appeared in Christian iconography, in a thirteenth century illuminated manuscript of the *Bible Moralisée*, where it was invested with religious and ethical connotations.<sup>50</sup> Concurrently, Franco de Cologne, in *Ars cantus mensurabilis* (ca. 1260) and Lambertus, in *Tractatus de musica* ca. 1270–75) were defining a new approach to accurate temporal notation in music. After about 1260 there was a transition from modal to mensural concepts in polyphonic music, shifting the representation of time in music from a system based on visual patterns and grouping of notes that were mere mnemonic aids to oral delivery to a system of distinct, differentiated signs that aimed at a clearer and less ambiguous representation of relatively distinct rhythmic values.<sup>51</sup>

In the last quarter of the thirteenth century, the hours were marked by the chimes of mechanical clocks on bell towers in churches at Milan and Beauvais. The invention of the first weight-driven mechanical clock is dated roughly between 1277 and 1300. At that time John Duns Scotus and others were propagating the theory of time as an absolute continuum, *a res fluens*, which exists only as an abstraction from material reality. The working of the mechanical clock is precisely that. In its regularity and continuity it is unrelated to organic time, which is irregular, to the experience of time as periodicity in nature, which is finite and uneven, or to calendar time that is marked by events. It stood to reason that if there was a continuous time-keeper, there must be continuous time. By the mid fourth century mechanical clocks were known throughout Europe and dominated the urban scene on churches, towers and palaces.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>50</sup> MS. 270b, fol.83v, Bodleian Library, Oxford; repr. in Lynn White Jr., *Medieval Religion and Technology: Collected Essays*, Berkeley, Los Angeles & London, 1978, fig. 7.

<sup>51</sup> I am indebted to Dorit Tanay for these explanations. See D. Tanay, "Natural Language, Artificial Language and the Representation of Time in Medieval Music," in Eva Teubel, Julie Dockrell & Liliana Tolchinsky (eds.), *Notational Knowledge, Developmental and Historical Perspectives*, Rotterdam, 2007, 45–64. See also William Oliver Strunk (ed.), *Source Readings in Music History, Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, New York, 1965, 139–140, revised edit. 1998; David Fenwick Wilson, *The Motet of the late Thirteenth century and Its Relationship to the Development of Rhythmic Polyphony*, PhD Dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 1977, 326–331 and his *Music in the Middle Ages*, New York, 1990.

<sup>52</sup> For a list of the earliest mechanical clocks in 14th c. Europe, see Cipolla, 1978 (as in note 46).

More than just symbols of civic prestige, they became the new medium of existence—the standard for all local motion and time measurement. While horologists were perfecting the accuracy of these clocks, William of Ockham was questioning the *primum mobile* as a precise reference. By the fourteenth century Venice and Padua were in the forefront of horological initiatives.<sup>53</sup> The astrarium created in sixteen years (1348–64) by Giovanni de' Dondi of Padua marked the climax of the development in this field. Petrarch commented that it was not really a clock but rather a complex planetarium.<sup>54</sup> In fact, it recorded the movement of the seven known planets with utmost precision on seven dials, and represented the solar, lunar and Roman cycles as well as two calendars of church feasts. Dondi's astrarium demonstrates the continued association between planetary movements and time measurement. The same association will dominate much of the artistic imagery in the late middle ages. The regulation of daily life and especially of production, commerce and monetary affairs by a mechanical timekeeper precipitated a new sense of time and its value. A dynamic economy demanded efficient utilization and control of time. As the virtue of moderation and self discipline became associated with temporal regulation and precision, chronometers became symbols of temperance.<sup>55</sup> But it also contributed to the mechanical outlook of the world, as Carlo Cipolla explained: "philosophers came to regard the universe as a great piece of clockwork, the human body as a piece of machinery, and God as an outstanding 'clock-maker'".<sup>56</sup> It is not surprising that, from the fourteenth century, artists depicted mechanical clocks in religious and secular allegorical contexts even before they became indications of status in prestigious portraits. The ubiquitous chronometers in allegorical still life, book illustrations and emblems continued to convey mechanistic, moralistic and religious metaphors in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

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<sup>53</sup> See Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venice and Antiquity: the Venetian Sense of the Past*, New Haven, 1996, 49–54.

<sup>54</sup> Regarding Dondi's astrarium, see Gimpel (as in note 48), 1976, 150–67 and White (as in note 50), 1978, 302–303. On the tradition of planetary and geared astrolabes as the source of medieval clocks: Derek Price, "Clockwork Before the Clock," *Horological Journal*, 97, 1955, 27–35.

<sup>55</sup> Lynn White Jr., "The Iconography of Temperantia and the Virtuousness of Technology," in Theodore K. Rabb & Jerrold E. Siegel (eds.), *Action and Conviction in Early Modern Europe*, Princeton, 1969, 197–219; reprinted in White, 1978 (as in note 50).

<sup>56</sup> Carlo M. Cipolla, *Before the Industrial Revolution, European Society and Economy 1000–1700*, (1976), 3rd edit., trans. & revised by C. Woodall, London, 1993, 152.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### TIME AND TEMPORALITY IN MEDIEVAL ART

A personification of Time *per se*, as opposed to images of limited durations or periods, was not depicted in Christian art before the fifteenth century. The preceding chapters, dealing with the problematic issues of time as perceived in early Christian and medieval contexts, have underlined the negation of time or its evasiveness as an abstract concept and the rejection of associated pagan tradition. How all of this changed in the Renaissance still remains somewhat enigmatic. Although focused studies of particular philosophical, theological, literary, scientific, historical or artistic aspects have been undertaken, a comprehensive picture is still lacking. Basic questions will be confronted in the following chapters from a predominantly art-historical viewpoint, while taking into account relevant issues, primarily of religious, intellectual and social history. Were changes in the conception of time expressed by iconographic innovations? Did pagan time imagery undergo a revival? Did medieval models contribute to the creation of a Renaissance iconography of Time? In the present chapter we will begin to investigate this last question by studying relevant artistic developments in late medieval art.

#### *The Cosmic Diagram*

Gothic rose windows throughout Europe illustrated the relationship between God and the temporal universe. In the round window of the Lausanne Cathedral, for example, Christ is surrounded by seasons, months, elements, signs of the zodiac, the sun and moon, night and day, and the rivers of Paradise. The images surrounding Christ represent the universe as conceived in categories of time, space and matter, through which the divine creator is revealed.<sup>1</sup> This diagrammatic image of the deity ruling the dynamics of time, as defined by *tempora* or periodic units, is derived

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<sup>1</sup> For the sources of this concept, see *Plato's Cosmology: the Timaeus of Plato*, translated by Francis Macdonald Cornford with a Running Commentary, Indianapolis, (1935), 1997, 34B & 47A.

from astrologically related traditions of Hellenistic and Roman origin that were mediated by medieval art.

Medieval cosmic diagrams, evoking the relationship between a cosmic personification or deity and the universal dimensions of time and space, demonstrate initial efforts to organize Christian ideas of temporal domination, duration and periodicity within a comprehensive universal structure. As figurative illustrations to complex texts that treated interrelated cosmological and theological theories, relationships between natural phenomena and man, the interdependence of the material and the spiritual, and the duality of time and eternity, their contribution might be limited. John Murdoch noted that “the central works of the Middle Ages on natural philosophy were for the most part bereft of illustrative material” and “most of the illustrations one finds in manuscripts of medieval works on natural philosophy do not relate to the subject of the work as a whole or even to some general doctrine expounded by the work in question”.<sup>2</sup> We will see, nevertheless, that from the seventh or eighth centuries some of the diagrammatic *rotae* illustrations were integral parts of manuscript texts serving as computistic aids (for the dating of Easter and liturgical feasts) or “handbooks” dealing with various doctrines and ideas through the classification, order, correspondences and oppositions of universal phenomena and their relationships to man. What will concern us here is the question of how these developments affected the gradual emergence of time imagery in the medieval and early Renaissance periods.

Among the earliest extant prototypes of the medieval cosmic diagram are late second and third century mosaic pavements found in various parts of the Roman Empire, related to the eastern cult of *Sol Invictus* that was officially instituted by Aurelius in 274. Examples from Münster and El Djem (Tunisia), for example, portray the solar god Helios/Apollo on his *quadriga*, surrounded by the solar year as represented by the circular band of zodiacal signs, with symbols of the four elements in the corners.<sup>3</sup> Related mosaics in the eastern empire also portrayed personifications of the months, with seasons or winds delegated to the four triangular corners.<sup>4</sup> In the third century a syncretistic image of Christ as *Sol Invictus* was depicted in a ceiling mosaic of the mausoleum of the *Julii*, located

<sup>2</sup> See John E. Murdoch, *Album of Science, Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, New York, 1984, 288.

<sup>3</sup> See Karl Lehmann, “The Dome of Heaven,” *Art Bulletin*, vol. 29, 1945, 225–48, fig. 14.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. the Antioch mosaic, in Doro Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, vol. I, Rome, 1971, 36–37, figs. 11–12. On winds, see Obrist (as in note 13 below).





Fig. 11. *Astronomical Diagram including Sol, the Zodiac and Periods of Time*, Illustration to Ptolemy, 9th c. copy of 4th c. original, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat.gr. 1291, fol. 9.

in the necropolis under the Church of St. Peter's (the Vatican), but it still lacked the temporal representations of pagan precedents. The image of the solar deity in the center of a cosmic diagram was perpetuated by astronomical illuminations, the most famous and earliest extant example being a ninth century illustration of Ptolemy's so-called "handy tables", a revised version of astronomical tables in his *Almagest* (mid 2nd c.) (Fig. 11).<sup>5</sup> This

<sup>5</sup> Ptolemaios, *Geographia*, Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Gr.1291, fol. 9r. The date of the manuscript is still debated and has been assigned to either 813–20 or 829–42, as in I. Spatharakis, "Some Observations on the Ptolemy MS. Vat. GR. 1291: Its Date and the Two Initial Miniatures," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, vol. 71, issue 1, 41–49 and H.D. Wright, "The Date of the Vatican Illuminated Handy Tables of Ptolemy and its Early additions," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, vol. 78, 1985, 355–62.

illustration contains six concentric circles, divided into twelve segments, with personifications of daily and nightly hours (distinguished by their dark or light colors), months and zodiac signs, and identifying Greek labels. The labels framing the personified hours around Helios define the date and time in which the sun enters the zodiac sign and have enabled scholars to calculate the date, presumably of the manuscript itself.

By the ninth century, concentric diagrams in computus manuscripts similarly represented the universe in combined categories of time and space but they frequently replaced the central image, or symbol of the deity,<sup>6</sup> with a spherical shaped *orbis terrae* (depicted in two-dimensional form) divided into three parts labeled *Asia*, *Europe* and *Africa*, the three known continents (Fig. 12).<sup>7</sup> The earliest *rota* of this kind illustrated Isidore's chapter "*De partibus terrae*" that was copied in some seventh century manuscripts of *De natura rerum* (such as El Escorial R.II.18, fol. 24v).<sup>8</sup> These were explicitly requested by the author and were referred to in his text. They were taken over in mid ninth century manuscript illuminations of Bede's *De temporum ratione* (ca. 725), which presented twelve radial divisions, including winds, days of the lunar month and monthly high tides, and ages of the moon, divided between the central

<sup>6</sup> A rare diagram illustrating *De Concordia mensium atque elementorum* of the monk Byrhtferth (late 10th or early 11th c.) shows a complex concordance of temporal factors, such as months, seasons, ages of man, solar and lunar months and signs of the zodiac, with spatial and material ones. At the center is an eight-spoked wheel that seems to be a variant of the cross or Christ's monogram with  $\chi\rho\varsigma$  (abbreviation for Christos in Greek) written above. See Murdoch (as in note 2), 356, fig. 290.

<sup>7</sup> Plato, in the *Timaeus*, conceived of a spherical earth in a spherical universe. This concept was generally accepted by Greeks in the 5th c. B.C. See Francis M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology. The "Timaeus" of Plato*, 4th edit., London, 1956 and Wesley M. Stevens, "The Figure of the Earth in Isidore's '*De natura rerum*,'" in *Cycles of Time and Scientific Learning in Medieval Europe*, Aldershot. & Brookfield 1995, chap. III. Bede, in his *De natura rerum* (ca. 701) still described the earth as a globe in a geocentric universe; for illustrations of the tripartite spherical earth in *rotae* illustrations to Bede, see Harry Bober, "An Illustrated Medieval School-Book of Bede's '*De Natura Rerum*,'" *The Journal of the Walter's Art Gallery*, vol. 19/20, 1956–57, 64–97, figs. 2, 3, 6, 78, 13, and Bianca Kühnel, *The End of Time in the Order of Things*, Regensburg, 2003, figs. 21 & 22. A spherical depiction of the world was depicted in Roman statues of Atlas supporting the cosmic globe. The Farnese Atlas (*Museo Archeologico Nazionale*, Naples), a 2nd century Roman marble copy of a Hellenistic sculpture of Atlas kneeling with a globe, is the oldest extant statue of the Titan of Greek mythology, and the oldest known representation of the celestial sphere. On computational literature between the 2nd to the 8th centuries, see C.W. Jones, *Beda's Opera De Temporibus*, Cambridge, Mass., 1943, 6–122.

<sup>8</sup> On "*Rotae* and Circular Diagrams", see Murdoch (as in note 2), 52–61 and Stevens (as above), 272–73.



Fig. 12. *Cosmic Diagram with tripartite orbis terrae*, illustration to Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, chapter XIV: *De terra et partibus*, 1472.

*rota* and four corner discs.<sup>9</sup> Subsequently, this spherical earth image with its tripartite division became a standard form in late medieval cosmological texts as well as texts of classical Latin authors, thereby mediating its adoption in allegorical illustrations of Time in the *Quattrocento*.

#### *Annus and the tempora*

Personifications were dispensed with in the series of *rotae* diagrams illustrating Isidore of Seville's *De natura rerum*, and inscriptions were used for the subdivisions to illustrate complex temporal and spatial concordances, such as the zodiacal circuit of the sun and planets, phases of the moon

<sup>9</sup> On these and other Carolingian computus and astronomical *rotae* illuminations, see See Kühnel, (as in note 7) 65–83; on “The Carolingian Contribution,” *Op. cit.*, 101–15 and Bruce S. Eastwood, *Ordering the Heavens, Roman Astronomy and Cosmology in the Carolingian Renaissance*, Leiden, 2007–08. Regarding manuscript illustrations of Isidore, Bede and the related tradition, see Bober (as in note 7), 64–97.





Fig. 13. [COL. PL. 3] *Annus*, "Fuldaer Sacramentar Fragment," Berlin Staats-Bibliothek, ca. 980.



Fig. 14. *Annus*, Aosta Cathedral, choir mosaic, 12th c.

that determine tides, and formation of the months of the year. An early innovation with far reaching implications is the schematic illustration to Isidore's chapter *De Annus* (the Year), where the center of the circular diagram is simply inscribed ANNUS in large capital letters, with seasons (*tempora*), humors and cardinal directions inscribed in the peripheral geometric design.<sup>10</sup> By the tenth century artists would enhance the ANNUS

<sup>10</sup> See Kühnel (as in note 7), figs. 50–52.



inscription by adding a visual personification, as seen, for example in so-called “Fuldaer Sakramentar Fragment” (Berlin, Staats-Bibliothek) assigned to about 980 (Fig. 13). There *Annus* is shown as a regal, bearded elder seated on a throne, holding the earth (space) in his right hand and controlling the seasons (time) in his left. *Dies* and *Nox* are personified as busts in medallions, and figures of the months are associated with their traditional agricultural attributes.

Of importance to this subject are medieval examples of transitional syncretistic iconography. One example is the *Sol-Christ* synthesis mentioned above, which exhibits the appropriation of solar symbolism and ritual by early Christianity. Another synthesis is represented by the *Annus-Christ* figure functioning as *pantocrator* or more specifically as ruler of Time (holding the Sun and Moon, Day and Night), as in the Romanesque floor mosaic in the choir of the Aosta Cathedral (Fig. 14). Not far away, in the presbytery of *San Savino* in Piacenza, a slightly later mosaic likewise focuses on the haloed personification of *Annus-Christ*, seated on a regal throne and holding the sun and moon.

Contemporary manuscript illuminations and tapestries presented the familiar version of a regal, crowned *Annus* seated on his throne in the central circle, holding *luna* and *sol*, with kneeling personifications marked *lux* and *tenebre*.<sup>11</sup> A famous example is the *rota* miniature in a manuscript of Hildegard von Bingen’s *Liber Scivias*, written in the mid twelfth century and illustrated almost a century later (Heidelberg, cod. Salem X 16, fol. 2v, 13th c.) (Fig. 15).<sup>12</sup> The second concentric circle of this *rota* diagram contains heads of the four cardinal directions, *oriens*, *auster*, *occidens* and *aquilo*. Allegorical representations relating to weather and climate are depicted in the third circle. The fourth circle contains four large personifications related to times of day and climatic conditions, with framed zodiacal signs between them. Personifications of the winds occupy the corners beyond the circular scheme to express their function as ordering cosmic forces that originate on the periphery.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> For further examples, see Peter Springer, “Trinitas-Creator-Annus,” *Beiträge zur mittelalterlichen Trinitäs-ikonographie*, *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch*, 38, 1976, 17–46.

<sup>12</sup> On Hildegard and her writings, see Charles Singer, “The Visions of Hildegard of Bingen,” in *From Magic to Science*, New York, 199–239 and his “The Scientific Views and Visions of Saint Hildegard,” in C. Singer, (ed.), *History, Philosophy and Sociology of Science*, (Oxford, 1917), repr. New York, 1975, 1–55, esp. pl. IV for the Heidelberg MS. Illumination discussed here.

<sup>13</sup> See Barbara Obrist, “Wind diagrams and Medieval Cosmology,” *Speculum*, vol. 72, no. 1, Jan. 1977, 33–84. In explaining the cosmic role of the winds, Obrist discusses the assimilation



Fig. 15. *Annus and the Macrcosm*, Hildegard of Bingen, *Liber scivias*, ca. 1200, Heidelberg University. Cod. Salem X 16, fol. 2v.

The uppermost figure in the outer circle is *Aurora* (Dawn), a nude figure whose lowered head is covered by her long red scarf, as if to suggest her awakening as she protects herself from the morning dew that she herself brings forth. According to Homer and later sources, *Eos* (*Aurora*) was “saffron robed”, as indeed she appears here (by design or by chance), but she lacks other mythological attributes, such as the chariot, wings and torch.<sup>14</sup> This figure of *Aurora*, in its iconographic succinctness, almost seems to prefigure Michelangelo’s statue of the same name, created almost four hundred years later in the Medici Chapel. But with the exception of *Notte*, Michelangelo’s sculpted personifications lack identifying attributes and convey the artist’s laconic and introverted vision through suggestive bodily movement. Unlike the Medici complex, the next three personifications in the *Liber Scivias* schema represent temporal change by referring to climatic or seasonal conditions. The second figure to the right, labeled *Serenitas* (Sunshine), carries flowers and a scepter and may represent the day or the month of May. *Tempestas* protects herself with warm clothes from stormy weather, which is a suitable way to represent the month of January, and *Pruina* (hoarfrost) is a man wearing a hat and tunic typical of the farmer who is pruning the vines in the month of March. These figures are particularly interesting in that they demonstrate how periods of time, were represented by seasonal activities or events, even in a cosmological diagram intended for didactic use.

In classical tradition, personified Night was linked to the moon, the figure of Dawn rose from the ocean and scattered dew from a vase, Day was associated with the sun deity, and the Evening, *Hesperus* (or *Vesper*), was represented by a boy carrying a torch, symbol of the evening star. Minimalistic icons of *Dies* and *Nox* identified with *Sol* and *Luna* are all that remained of this; instead the passage of time was represented in medieval art through Labors of the Months or Seasons. Actually, this method demonstrates a similar way of thinking. Since time was not yet conceived as an abstraction from events, it could be represented only by the events themselves. It would take a few more centuries before representations of time would be liberated from traditional Aristotelian associations, from

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of stoic concepts of *pneuma* to metaphorically describe the action of the incorporeal (and immaterial) Christian Divine Spirit, emphasizing the closeness of the winds to the Divine Spirit, on the pictorial level (p. 76). Although they were employed as illustrations of natural phenomena, winds in cosmological diagrams would also play a prominent role as spiritual, life supporting instruments of the divine will.

<sup>14</sup> Homer, *Illiad*, I, 477; Virgil, *Aenead*, V, 738, VI, 535, VII, 26; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VII.

the identification of time with change, without which it could not exist, and its conception as the measure of change (or movement) in respect to before and after (*Physics* 219b 1–2). We have noted the influence exerted by these precepts on medieval philosophers and theologians, primarily after the rediscovery and translations of his texts.

By the twelfth century *Annus* was generally the focus of cosmological *rotae*. A beautiful example is that of the *Chronicon Zwfaltense* (cod. Hist., fol. 17v, Stuttgart), dated around 1140–45, where the concentric circles focus on a bearded image of *Annus*, crouching or sitting and holding up busts of Sun and Moon, with roundels of *Nox* and *Dies* at his sides (Fig. 16). A remarkable feature of this *Annus* figure is his hairy body, identifying him with the pre-Christian mythical Wild Man, a barbaric liminal creature of erotic and savage behavior, who lived on the margins of civilization. He survived in medieval and Renaissance fables and rituals of seasonal fertility and rejuvenation of nature, primarily in northern Europe.<sup>15</sup> But what is he doing in the guise of *Annus*?

Recently, Debra Higgs Strickland associated a Renaissance illumination (ca. 1500) of the Wild Man and his family, attributed to Jean Boudichon, with a popular French ballad of *Les quatre états de la société* (The Four Conditions of Society), and the positive idea of the Noble Savage, who is satisfied with his natural state and rejects the decadence of civilized society.<sup>16</sup> The emphasis on family and progeny in the Renaissance iconography of the Wild Man appears to be a vestige of his function in fertility symbolism as related to cyclic periodicity in nature.

Other Renaissance images throw further light on this *Annus-Wild Man* synthesis. A woodcut illustration in Stephen Hawes, *The Pastime of Pleasure*, published in London, 1506, shows a personification of Time as a hybrid figure. His upper half is that of the hairy and bearded Wild Man, the lower part is that of an armored knight, and his attributes are the wings of Time, the sun and stars, a mechanical clock, and the flames of destruction.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See R. Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge, 1952, New York, 1979; Timothy Husband, *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism*, catalogue of an exhibition at the Cloister's, MMA, New York, 1980; Dorothy Yamamoto, *The Boundaries of the Human in Medieval English Literature*, Oxford, 2000.

<sup>16</sup> D. Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art*, Princeton, 2003, 247–49.

<sup>17</sup> Reproduced in Samuel C. Chew, *The Pilgrimage of Life*, Port Washington, New York & London, 1973, fig. 33.



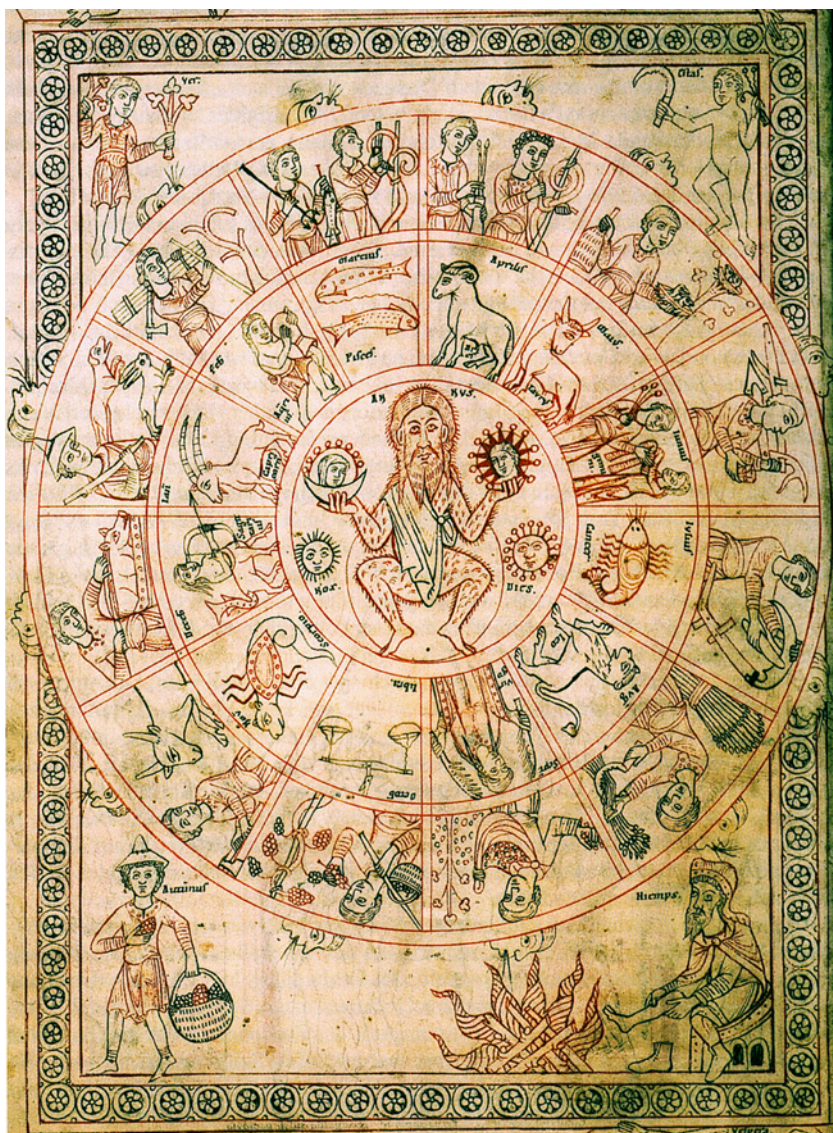


Fig. 16. *Annus*, from *Chronicon Zwifaltense*, Cod. hist. 415, 2<sup>o</sup>, fol. 17v, ca. 1140–62, Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek.





Fig. 17. *Wild Man-Annus*, marble façade statue, Venice, Campiello Santa Maria Nova, Palazzo Bembo-Boldù. Author's photo.

Another bearded Wild Man holding a large solar disc or sun-dial stands in a classical niche on the Venetian *Trecento* facade of the Palazzo Bembo-Boldù in *Campiello Santa Maria Nova* (Fig. 17). It was probably superimposed on the older palace by the scholar Giammatteo Bembo, nephew of Pietro Bembo, when he resided there in the second half of the sixteenth century. The statue of classical mien, and apparently devoid of negative connotations, is characterized by the ancient solar chronometer. He may have been conceived as *Annus* or *Tempus* or some conflation of personified time images.<sup>18</sup> In any case, he provides evidence of the perpetuation of *Annus*, in the guise of the primeval Wild Man, as a figure of cosmic time.

A third type of *Annus* figure is found in the embroidered cosmological tapestry from Girona, Catalonia (ca. 1100) (Fig. 18), which also depicts Creation scenes from *Genesis*, winds, seasons, months, rivers of Paradise and the sun and moon on chariots. A young and beardless Christ as *Pantocrator* occupies the central circle of the concentric design but, in the exterior square frame above him, the half figure of *Annus* is conspicuously emphasized on the white ground of a roundel. This *Annus* is bearded and hold a tee shaped walking stick in his right hand and the wheel of Time in the left. It appears, therefore, that the personification of the Year, in that it constituted a representation of cyclic periodicity, was concurrently conceived as an image of time in its broader sense. Such a clear-cut division between Christ as *Pantocrator* and a personification of *Annus* reflects the beginning of time's emergence from the dominion of theological cosmology and astrology.<sup>19</sup> How early Renaissance illustrators of Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo* were inspired by models of this kind will be discussed in chapter six.

### *Macrocosm and Microcosm*

Variants of the cosmic diagram established correspondences between categories of time, space and matter. The four seasons (*tempora*) were juxtaposed to the cardinal points, elements or winds (the *macrocosm*) and to ages of man (the *microcosm*); the twelve months (i.e. divisions of time)

<sup>18</sup> This figure of the "*homo silvanus*" was referred to by Patricia Fortini Brown, in *Venice and Antiquity, The Venetian Sense of the Past*, New Haven & London, 1996, 285–86.

<sup>19</sup> For a different interpretation of the relation between the Christ figure and *Annus*, see Lily Arad, "From Creation to Salvation in the Embroidery of Girona," *Miscellània Litúrgica Catalana*, 12, 2004, 59–88. Arad argued that *Annus* often represented Christological elements that turned him into an allegory of Christ as Chronocrator-Cosmocrator, *ibid.*, 14.



Fig. 18. [COL. PL. 4] *Creation Tapestry*, ca. 1100, Museum of the Girona Cathedral, Catalonia.

corresponded to signs of the zodiac or planets (the *macrocosm*) and to parts of the body (in the *microcosm*); the six days of Creation or Ages of the world were compared to qualities of the combined elements (matter) and to Ages of Man (cycles of the *microcosm*).<sup>20</sup> Time, space and matter were not clearly differentiated as such either in the texts or the illustrations, but as *Annus* inevitably became the representative of cosmic time, the macrocosm was depicted in categories of space, matter and time functioning under its domination, and man reflected in his body and soul a parallel synthesis of the three categories.

<sup>20</sup> Ideas regarding the nature of the cosmos and macro-microcosmic parallels appear in the writings of Isidore (7th c.), Bede (673–735), Byrthferd of Ramsey (*Commentary on Bede*, ca. 1000), Hugh of Saxony (1096–1141), Bernard Sylvestrus (ca. 1150), Herrad of Landsberg (d. 1195), Hildegard of Bingen (d. 1179), and Lambert of St. Omar (*Liber Floridus*, 1120); see L. Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, New York & London, 1964, vol. II, pl. 35a; Charles Singer, *From Magic to Science*, London, 1958; Saxl, (as in note 8). Regarding the medical aspects of the theme and their illustrations, see Harry Bober, “The Zodiacal Miniatures of the Très Riches Heures of the Duke of Berry: its sources and meaning,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 1948, 1–7.

Diagrammatic depictions of the *microcosmos-macrocosmos* analogy were originally introduced in manuscripts of Isidore de Seville's *De natura rerum*. In late eighth century manuscripts, the words *MUNDUS*, *ANNUS*, *HOMO* were inscribed in the central roundel, with elements, humors and their qualities concentrically arranged in a framing geometric pattern (Fig. 19).<sup>21</sup> This scheme was repeatedly copied in manuscripts of Bede's *De natura rerum*, which was derived from Isidore's work of the same name, in his *De temporum ratione*, and in compilations that included the latter as well as other related texts. In his study of such compilations on natural science, Harry Bober emphasized that illustrations were conceived in the original plan of the work geared to didactic purposes, and that chapters were written about the illustrations and not, as we might assume, in the opposite order. According to Bober, "the writers wrote explanations around such *rotae*, among which the unforgettably simple and ingenious schemes for the *Microcosmic-Macrocosmic* harmony remain the "classic" graphic statement for the Middle Ages".<sup>22</sup> Consequently, Isidore was credited for the wheel *schemata* that were used as a method of expressing textual correlations by graphic means.

By the twelfth century inscribed labels in the *rotae* were often replaced by figurative images. This transition from word to image is noteworthy as a further step towards the visual representation of time as an abstract concept. Among the wealth of beautiful illuminations in manuscripts of the encyclopedic *Liber floridus*, by Lambert of Saint Omer (ca. 1090–1120), there is a remarkable depiction of the *macrocosm-microcosm* analogy constructed in two interrelated circular diagrams (Wolfenbüttel, codex. Guelf, *Gud.lat.* 1.2, fol. 67, ca. 1150) (Fig. 20). The geometric layout follows the *rotae* precedents in manuscripts of Isidore's *De natura rerum* that, as previously noted, contained inscriptions instead of images. By contrast, the center of the *Mundus maior* circle in the Wolfenbüttel illustration shows a nude and aged male with a nimbus and long beard holding spheres marked *dies* and *nox*, with others below representing *anni* and *menses*. The surrounding concentric circles contain inscriptions that introduce analogies between the six Days of Creation and the six Ages of the World. The central image below, representing *Mundus minor*, depicts a nude child carrying *ignis* and

<sup>21</sup> E.g. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 16128, fol. 16r and Paris, B.N, MS.lat.6413, fol. 5v. See discussions and reproductions in Bober (as above), figs. 53–55; Fritz Saxl, *Macrocosm and Microcosm in Medieval Pictures*, London, 1957 and Murdoch (as in note 2), 356, fig. 286.

<sup>22</sup> Bober (as in note 7), 64–97, esp.73–74, & figs. 4, 5, 11, 13.





Fig. 19. *Mundus/Annus/Homo*, illustration to Isidore of Seville, *De responsione mundi et astrorum ordinatore*, printed Augsburg, 1472 (after an late 8th c., manuscript of *De rerum natura*), Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 16128, fol. 16r.

*aer* as inscribed spheres, with additional elements and seasons inscribed in spheres below. It is notable that the figure representing *Mundus maior* is not Christ, for although he is haloed he is also nude, nor is he *Annus*, for he holds the Year together with other parts of time. He is characterized by his age, nudity, *nimbus* and parts of time—attributes taken over from *Annus* and from *Helios-Sol* as *Cosmocrator* but, to my knowledge, never before combined. This might be a depiction of the platonic World Soul, the *nous* or *anima mundi*, from which the human soul was said to be derived, as described in the *Timeaus* (29d-47e), then by Neoplatonists in late antiquity, and was revived in theological texts of the Romanesque.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> For a 12th c. personification of the *anima mundi* as a female figure in the *Clavis physicae* of Honorius Augustodunensis, see Murdoch (as in note 2), 332–34, fig. 274.





In any case, illustrations of this type indicate that artists were seeking ways to visually depict a universal *imago temporis*, one that did not merely represent phenomena of nature but aimed to express the idea of time as a fundamental creation or manifestation of the Divine Spirit.

An even more explicit representation of this idea is found in a twelfth century illumination of the *Clavis physicae* of Honorius Augustodunensis (Paris, B.N. lat. 6734, fol. 3v), an adaption of the *De divisione naturae* of John Scotus Eriugena (ca. 810–77) (Fig. 21).<sup>24</sup> At the top is a personification of *Bonitas*, flanked by wisdom, knowledge and virtues. In a second rank *effetum causarum* are represented by busts of *Locus* and *Tempus*, with *materia informis* (unformed or primordial matter) in the center. Thus Time and Space are presented as the two elements, or dimensions, needed to form an organized world. *Tempus* has no defining traits beyond his gender and beard, presumably defining him as aged by contrast to the youthful female *locus*. The rank below, marked *natura creata, non creans*, shows the four elements, and at the bottom of the page God is depicted as *finis* (i.e. the beginning and end).

It is remarkable that the earliest extant depiction of the ancient *melothesia* doctrine (Paris, B.N., MS.lat. 7028, fol. 154r, 11th c.) (Fig. 22) resembles the *rota* designs, in that it centers on a Christ-like image of *Sol* surrounded by signs of the zodiac with the four seasons in corner roundels. If not for the inscriptions on the circumference of the circle, which connects each zodiacal sign with a part of the body, there would be no indication of the micro-macrocosmic connection. Subsequent illustrations explicitly connecting parts of the body with signs of the constellations are found primarily in medical texts and express astrological concepts originating in late antiquity that were proliferated by Greek and Latin texts and translations of these, launching the *melothesia* doctrine into far areas of eastern civilization.<sup>25</sup> It should be underlined that, in this eleventh century *melothesia* diagram, specific medical implications seem less important than the general idea that the functioning of the human body is inter-related with the temporal passage of the sun (the central image) through the constellations (the zodiacal signs on the periphery).

<sup>24</sup> This illumination comes from the same manuscript mentioned above of the *Clavis physicae*, discussed by Murdoch, with a reproduction (as above).

<sup>25</sup> Specific aspects of this subject were investigated in two of my studies; see S. Cohen, "The Scorpion Apsaras at Khajuraho: Migrations of a Symbol," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay*, Mumbai, vol. 74, 2000, 19–38 and "The Ambivalent Scorpio in Bronzino's London Allegory," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, vol. 135, 2000, 171–88, repr. in *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*, Leiden, 2008, 263–90.

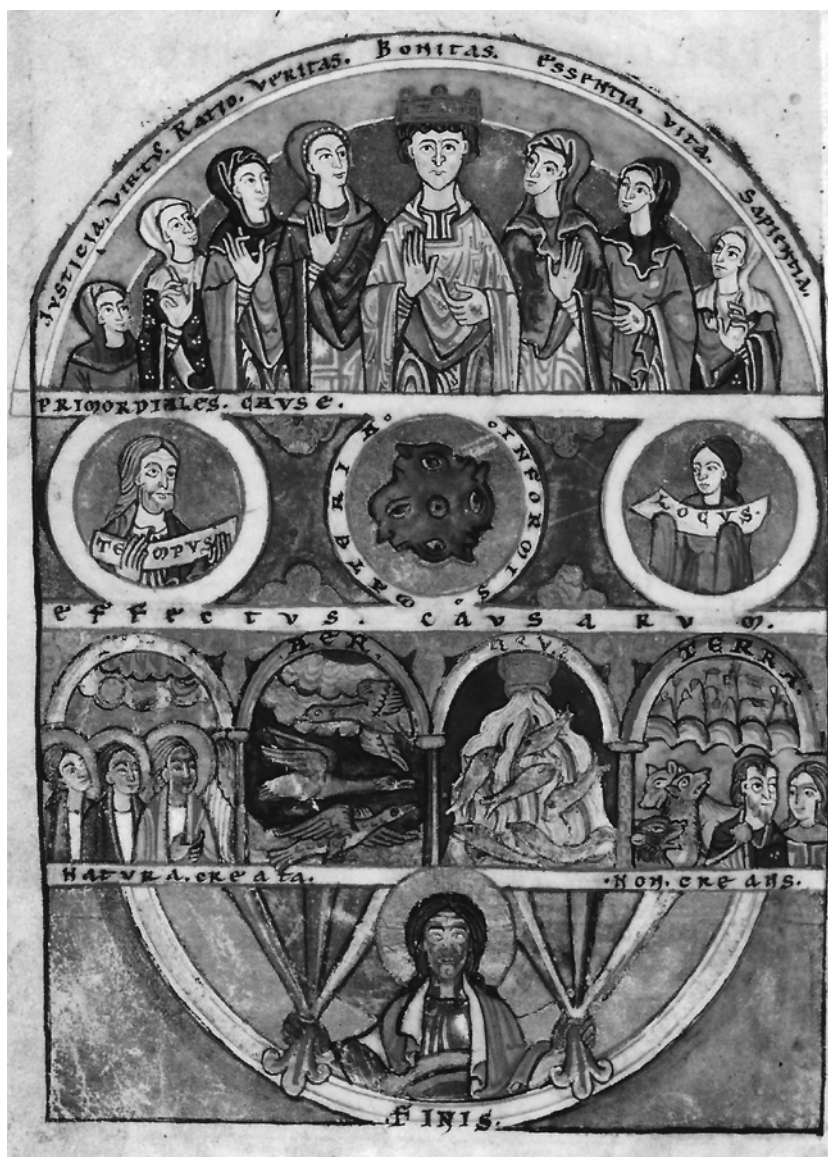


Fig. 21. *Manuscript Illumination, Clavis physicae* of Honorius Augustodunensis, MS.lat. 6734, fol. 3v, 12th c., Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.





Fig. 22. *Melothesia*, Paris, MS.lat. 7027, fol. 154r., 11th c., Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

### *Fortuna and the Ages of Man*

While artists were depicting relationships between man and the universe as one harmonious system functioning according to a more or less predictable underlying order, another artistic image depicted the human situation in moralistic terms. The allegorical figure of *Fortuna* in medieval art personified the ever changing fortunes of man and his resulting

sense of precariousness, but this definition does not adequately account for her accumulated connotations. Ancient *Fortuna* was an omnifarious figure, transformed from an abstraction into a Goddess, a mythological figure, or a symbol of fate, mutability and the enticements of chance.<sup>26</sup> The concept of time is implicit in conceptions of ancient and medieval Fortune. But the medieval lady who turns her wheel in manuscripts and frescoes does not resemble her antique predecessors *Kairos*, *Tyche*, *Occasio* or even the Roman *Fortuna*, although the Romans had already given her the sphere or wheel, a rudder and a capricious character.<sup>27</sup> Nor does medieval *Fortuna* relate to the iconography of time in the early Renaissance, although sophisticated allegories of the *Cinquecento* made Time and Fortune partners and occasionally interchanged their attributes.<sup>28</sup> By then Fortune looked more like her pagan predecessors than like the Christian *Fortuna*, whose role in moral allegory was derived from Boethius (early 6th c.).<sup>29</sup> While it may appear from the above that the iconography of medieval *Fortuna* turning her wheel had little in common with that of her Renaissance namesake, both were implicitly associated with temporal concepts. Although they are not common, one can find some early expressions of this connection in literature and art at the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> For an excellent study of the history and transformations of Fortune, see Florence Buttay-Jutier, *Fortuna, Usages politiques d'une allégorie morale à la Renaissance*, Paris, 2008.

<sup>27</sup> Ovid (*Tristia*, V, viii, 5–8) described *Fortuna* standing on her wheel. Horace (*Odes*, 1:35) described her as mistress of the sea, and she often carries a rudder in Roman iconography, especially on coins. Horace (*Odes*, III, xxix, 49ff.), Ovid (*op. cit.*), Apuleius (*Golden Ass*, VII, 2), Juvenal (*Satires*, X, 363), Seneca (*Epistles*, lxxiv, I), Pliny (*Historia Naturalis*, II, 22), all refer to her capricious character. For the iconography of *Fortuna* in classical art, see Wilhelm Heinrich Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, (1915) 1965, vol. 1.2, pp. 1503ff. For a basic study of *Fortuna*'s depictions with literary and iconographic sources, see Howard R. Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna in Medieval Literature*, New York, (Harvard, 1927) New York, 1967. Regarding classical sources of the circle and wheel to which man is bound and suffers undesirable fate, see Richard Broxton Onians, *The Origins of European Thought about the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time and Fate*, Cambridge, 1988, 452–54. Cf. Fig. 98 and my discussion in chapter eight.

<sup>28</sup> See R. Wittkower, "Chance, Time and Virtue," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, I, 1937, 313–21 and F. Kiefer, "The Conflation of *Fortuna* and *Occasio* in Renaissance Thought and Iconography," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, vol. 9, 1979, 1–27.

<sup>29</sup> Boethius, *De consolazione philosophiae*, II: *The consolation of Philosophy*, trans. V.E. Watts, Harmondsworth, 1976, 54–77. Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art Chrétien*, II, Paris, 1957, 639–41. Regarding late antique and early Christian literary sources of *Fortuna*, see Buttay-Jutier (as in note 26), 60–66.

<sup>30</sup> See Patch (as in note 27), 115–17.





Fig. 23. 'Mere Nature'/'Temps' on the Wheel of Fortune, French miniature, ca. 1400 (location unknown; originally published by Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology*, 1972 edit., pl. 50).

In a French miniature of about 1400, originally reproduced by Erwin Panofsky in 1939,<sup>31</sup> "Temps" is uniquely personified as a winged and triple-headed woman standing on the wheel of *Fortuna* (Fig. 23). The detail shown by Panofsky, however, is a small section of a full-page allegorical

<sup>31</sup> Erwin Panofsky, "Father Time," in *Studies in Iconology, Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*, New York, Evanston, San Francisco, London, (1939), 1972, 69–94, fig. 50. The same illustration was reproduced in its entirety in Raymond Klibansky, Fritz Saxl & Erwin Panofsky, *Saturn and Melancholy*, New York, 1964, fig. 58, as "The Wheel of Life", without explanations.

depiction, complete with inscriptions and a title explaining that this is a portrait of *Mere Nature*. Revolving with the wheel are seven figures—a scheme familiar from church art (sculpture, pavements and stained glass) and manuscript illuminations illustrating the fluctuation of human existence under Fortune's rule. Below the wheel and supporting it is a dark-faced, half naked woman, which I presume to be *Fortuna Meretrix* (the harlot) as described, for example, by Ovid, Boethius and later by the Italian Latin poet Arrigo (Henry) of Settimello, whose *Elegia* (1190) appeared in two *Trecento* translations and was referred to by later authors.<sup>32</sup> Panofsky referred to the upper figure as a scholastic personification of time and failed to mention her position on the wheel of Fortuna or to explain her function in its iconographic context.

Who was *Mere Nature*, and how was she related to Time and Fortune? The literary tradition of *Natura*, the personification of nature, goes back to antiquity but gained popularity particularly in medieval philosophical allegories.<sup>33</sup> As a literary personification *Natura* could stand for the creative principle or the order and harmony of all creation. She was sometimes conceived as an intermediary between the divine principle and matter; often she presided over continuity in the mutable world. In the French manuscript the underlying cosmic order is illustrated by the parts of time, the seasons and months inscribed in Time's wings, the hours of prayer, and the three heads marked past, present and future. Thus periodicity was conceived as the underlying order of nature, a concept set forth by Boethius, which had bridged the classical idea of *Natura* with that of the Middle Ages.<sup>34</sup> Boethius had placed lady *Natura* opposite a two-faced *Fortuna* in an allegory of man's right to self-determination that was later illustrated with the translation of Jean de Meun (ca. 1305) (Paris, B.N., MS. Fr.809, fol. 40, 15th c.).<sup>35</sup> Man could choose between a life in

<sup>32</sup> Ovid, *Fasti*, VI, 569ff.; Henry of Settimello: *Elegia de Diversitatem Fortunae et Philosophiae Consolatione*, (ca. 1190), Liber I: "Que peiora potes, meretrix fortuna, noverca pessima, Medea dirior, Ydra ferox? Deveni ad nichilum: restans michi spiritus ossa non habet, in quo nil hec tua probra valent." See Howard R Patch, *The Tradition of the Goddess Fortuna in Roman Literature and in the Transitional Period*, Northampton, Mass. & Paris, 1922, 151.

<sup>33</sup> See George D. Economou, *The Goddess Natura in Medieval Literature*, Cambridge, Mass., 1972.

<sup>34</sup> Boethius, *De Cons. Phil.*(as in note 29), II. Pr.II, Iv & V; see Economou (as above), 28–52.

<sup>35</sup> This is reproduced in Richard A. Dwyer, *Boethian Fictions: Narratives in the Medieval French Versions of the Consolatio Philosophiae*, Medieval Academy Books, no. 83, Cambridge, Mass., 1976, fig. 4.

accordance with his true nature, one that is attune with the universe, or a life under the rule of Fortuna. Chaucer, who also translated Boethius in the fourteenth century, not long before the illustration under discussion was designed, repeated this theme in his *Parlement of Foules*.<sup>36</sup> He focused on the conflict between *Natura*, the principle of universal harmony, and *Venus-Luxuria*, goddess of enticement. The illustrator of the French illumination contrasted *Temps*, an angelic modestly attired figure, with a half-naked temptress. Between these two rotated the wheel of life. But whatever choice man made, the inscription warns us, *Temps* would bring both *douceurs* (sweet things) and *desereune* (misfortune). In fact she is dispensing these from two jars that recall Fortuna's urns of good and evil.<sup>37</sup>

Two important conclusions can be drawn from this comparison between the illustration and its literary precedents. *Natura* was newly interpreted by the French illuminator in terms of time, and although they were contrasted in the illustration, Time and Fortune were associated as two interrelated aspects of Nature. This is one of the earliest visual expressions of an association between time and fortune in proto-Renaissance iconography and, as such, anticipates those of Renaissance and Baroque allegories.<sup>38</sup>

The iconography of Fortune's wheel demonstrates a transformation that was widely adopted from the fourteenth century, primarily in northern Europe. The traditional figures rising and falling on the wheel originally conveyed a social and moral message, admonishing against pride and vanity in a world of fluctuating fortunes. The king at the summit would lose his crown in the descent. But in this later variant of the wheel, images of changing status are replaced by those of the Ages of Man. There are seven in this wheel, but the life cycle could alternately be divided into four, six,

<sup>36</sup> See F.N. Robinson (ed.), *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, Boston, 1957, 791–92 and Economou (as in note 33), 129–30.

<sup>37</sup> See Patch (as in note 27), 53, note 1.

<sup>38</sup> For depictions of the wheel of Fortune in *Trionfo del Tempo* illustrations, see e.g. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, MS.78 D11, fol. 204r (Fig. 51), Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, BR.103, fol. 57v, and the engraving by George Pencz (Fig. 69). The identification or association of Time and Fortune (or *Occasio*) was very common in 17th and 18th century art; e.g. "die Zeit" by E. Maser in the 1758–60 Hertel edition of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*: C. Ripa, *Baroque and Rococo Pictorial Imagery*, Dover & New York, 1971. See Samuel C. Chew, "Time and Fortune," *Journal of English Literary History*, VI, 1939, 83–113 and *The Pilgrimage of Life*, Port Washington, New York, London, 1973, 26 ff.

ten or twelve definitive stages.<sup>39</sup> As the wheel became associated with the passage of life, its traditional social and moral significance was modified into a type of *memento mori* theme. Both versions proclaimed the vanity of worldliness, but the first was a product of religious moralization, whereas the second expressed a mental attitude, an ontological awareness, that was beginning to find expression in artistic themes.

Images of the *Seven Ages of Man*, as related to the Seven Planets, were popularized in *Trecento* painting, occasionally arranged in a linear rather than a circular (*rotae* based) progression. These illustrated the planetary influences on the stages of human life, a theme familiar from the *Tetrabiblos* of Ptolemy, transmitted by medieval western and Islamic writings, and subsequently promoted in Renaissance literature and art.<sup>40</sup> One of the salient characteristics of later presentations was the manner in which it demonstrated human traits and experience, emphasizing the significance of temporal development in each stage of life, rather than reproducing the paradigmatic, abstract analogy between microcosm and macrocosm. Elizabeth Sears indicated that the seven-part *schema*, as opposed to alternative divisions into three, four, five, or six-ages, was used to express man's moral dilemmas or his stage of moral progress.<sup>41</sup> Thus late medieval artists adopted the seven-part scheme as a moralizing device, enhancing the identification of the spectator by introducing relevant details of daily life at each stage.

It has been suggested by Catherine Harding that Guariento's cycle of the Seven Ages of Man, in the apse of the Church of the Eremitani in Padua (c. 1361–65), "was conceived in response to a climate of intellectual enquiry into notions of time framed by naturalistic and theocentric theologies of history, conceived in relation to the discernment of signs, both invisible and visible...generated in the fourteenth century 'renaissance' of Augustinian thought".<sup>42</sup> Whether Guariento's inspiration for the Ages of Man and Woman, was indebted to the writings of Augustine or to

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<sup>39</sup> A fourteenth century manuscript illumination in *the De Lisle Psalter*, British Library, MS. Arundel 83, fol. 126v (1339), shows a Wheel of Life with the face of God at the hub and ten stages in roundels, each stage defined by a characterizing inscription and depiction. Beginning with the infant and his mother, the series ends with the funeral in the ninth medallion, and the tomb in the tenth.

<sup>40</sup> See Elizabeth Sears, *The Ages of Man: Medieval Interpretations of the Life Cycle*, Princeton, 1986, 47–53.

<sup>41</sup> Sears (as above), 134–37. See also John Anthony Burrow, *The Ages of Man*, Oxford, c. 1986, 1988.

<sup>42</sup> Catherine Harding, "Time, History and the Cosmos: the Dado of the Church of the Eremitani, Padua," in Louise Bourdua & Anne Dunlop (eds.), *Art and the Augustinian Order in Early Renaissance Italy*, Aldershot & Burlington VT, 2007, 127–42, esp. 128.

contemporary notions of astral influence in the *Trecento* seems peripheral in the context of his visual interpretation. In other words, the images, far from constituting textual illustrations, convey an independent, unmediated message where the actual experience of mutability is demonstrated, significantly, on the dado that represented the profane as opposed to the sacred sphere. While the question of a moralistic-theological message in the Augustinian context may still be controversial,<sup>43</sup> we should not overlook the direct realism of the image. The fact that the movements of time, subject to stellar rotations and planetary conjunctions, led ultimately to the pains of mental and physical dissolution, is poignantly illustrated by the melancholy geriatrics in the Seventh Age of Life under Saturn, who are trying to warm themselves over braziers.<sup>44</sup>

### *Time and Death*

The Earliest personification of Death produced by Christianity was the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse, who was characterized in the New Testament only by his pale horse. Medieval equestrian figures of Death derive from this text or from the early interpretations it inspired. Personifications of Life and Death were not common. One example, in a diagrammatic illustration of tenth century English missal, shows *Mors* as a winged monster with horns and a beard, naked but for a hairy loin-cloth, with claws on his feet. Monsters emerge on either side of his head (Fig. 24).

*Mors* and *Vita* help illustrate Christ's victory over death in the symbolic Crucifixion illuminating the eleventh century *Book of Pericopes* by the Abbess Uta of Regensburg (Fig. 25).<sup>45</sup> The inscription tells us that death was defeated and perished, while the life of the saints continues eternally. *Vita* and *Mors* replace *Ecclesia* and *Synagoga* on either side of the crucifix, therefore *Mors* assumes *Synagoga*'s bent stance and carries the broken lance. *Synagoga* had a blindfold; *Mors* has his mouth tied. The sickle he carries is an original attribute of death as well as of time.

<sup>43</sup> In contrast to Harding's assumptions regarding Augustinian or contemporary Paduan influences, Sears (as in note 40), 113, assumed that Guariento's cycle was not conceived for the church and that he probably had recourse to a manuscript model with no connections to Padua.

<sup>44</sup> See reproductions in Sears (as in note 40), fig.48 and Harding (as in note 42), fig. 40.

<sup>45</sup> Munich, MS.clm. 13601, fol. 3v, ca. 1020. *The Book of Pericopes* or *Uta Codex* is a richly decorated monastic gospel lectionary; see Adam S. Cohen, *The Uta Codex: Art, Philosophy and Reform in Eleventh Century Germany*, University Park, Penn., 2000, esp. fig. 10 & color plate 2.







Fig. 25. *Crucifixion with Vita and Mors*, illumination, *Book of Pericopes* of Abbess Uta, Regensburg, MS.lat. 13601, fol. 3v, first quarter of the 11th c., Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich.



Fig. 26. *The Three Living and the Three Dead*, detail of the *Trionfo della Morte*, Pisa, *Camposanto*, attributed to Francesco Traini or Buonamico Buffalmacco, ca. 1330s.

By contrast to the scarcity of death imagery in early medieval art, this theme became conspicuously prominent from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Pagan personifications, such as *Thanatos*, were unsuited to express medieval attitudes to death and entirely new iconographic themes were introduced. Four of these themes, that were widespread, also provide evidence of new temporal concepts. The theme of The Three Living and the Three Dead was based on a legend that appeared in literature by the twelfth century and was illustrated from the early thirteenth century, especially in Italy and France (Fig. 26). In accordance with the legend reciting how three kings were shown three open graves by the Egyptian hermit Macarius, artists depicted three corpses in various stages of decomposition. Inscriptions relayed a warning to the living, supposedly communicated by the corpses themselves, that a similar fate awaited them. Social connotations, not unlike those conveyed by Fortune's wheel, were introduced by converting the kings into equestrian nobles or by assigning each of the three living to a different social milieu.





Fig. 27. *Danse Macabre*, anonymous woodcut in Guy Marchant editions, Paris, 1491 & 1492, London, British Museum.

The second theme, known as the Dance of Death or *Danse Macabre*, appeared later but also juxtaposed living and dead, this time in pairs where both figures were facets of the same individual (Fig. 27). It broadened the population of prospective victims to include all social strata and occupations as well as both genders. Paintings of this theme first decorated walls in courtyards of cemeteries and monasteries, and later it was diffused through prints. As in the previous example, the dead were originally pictured as corpses in the process of decomposition. Clean skeletons were substituted only in the sixteenth century.

Both of the above mentioned versions of the living confronted by the dead are related to the so-called *transi-tombs* and especially to those that contrasted the decaying corpse of the deceased with his living effigy on the same tomb (Fig. 28). About the time that the earliest *transi-tombs* were appearing, just after the Black Death wiped out about a third of Europe's population (1348), artists began covering entire walls with images of Death triumphing over mankind. Between 1350 and 1360, contemporary with or soon after the composition of Petrarch's *Trionfo della Morte*, the personification of Death attacking her victims was painted at the *camposanto* in Pisa, in Sacrospedo near Subiaco (Fig. 29), in the Church of Santa Croce in Florence, and elsewhere in Italy.



Fig. 28. Drawing of Transi Tomb, North England, ca. 1430–40, MS.Add. 37049, fol. 32v, London, © The British Library Board.





Fig. 29. *Triumph of Death*, fresco, Sacrospeco near Subiaco, 14th c.

We need only to compare artistic portrayals of death predating the twelfth century with the latter depictions to grasp the change of approach.<sup>46</sup> In examples of the tenth and eleventh century Death remained an abstraction, an external force whose victims and effects were not shown. By contrast, in the later themes of the *Three Living and the Three Dead*, the *Danse Macabre* and the *transi-tombs*, cadavers were morbid representations of human transience, characterized by the stark realism of post-mortem decomposition. The emphasis was not on the cause but on the effect—on the process evolving in time. The sense of temporal passage was inevitably linked to the idea of death and, whether the approach was mystical, religious or epicurean, the association was ostensible.

Socio-economic transitions and upheavals, technological progress that was changing life-styles, and recurrent epidemics of the plague that intensified the sense of precariousness, have been related to changing concepts

<sup>46</sup> On attitudes to death in the Middle Ages, see Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, London, 1924; Alberto Tenenti, *Il senso della morte e l'amore della vita nel Rinascimento*, Torino, 1957; Jeannie Choron, *Death and Western Thought*, New York and London, 1963, 81–108; Philip Aries, *Western Attitudes Towards Death from the Middle Ages to the Present*, London, 1974.

of time and death in the late Middle Ages. For a devout Christian who aspired to and revered the absolute, the concept of change denoted decline, degeneration and even evil.<sup>47</sup> Transitional states and the reality of physical corruption and decay had not been dealt with in western art. The altered perception of time and space, as expressed in late medieval naturalistic art, has also been linked to the developments of natural science in the urban milieu.<sup>48</sup> In the light of the foregoing discussion, we may conclude that the perception of time was not only naturalistic but also realistic. I use the term naturalistic to define a formal and objective approach, and the term realistic in describing an attitude to that which underlies external experiences and constitutes the true essence. Naturalistic temporal perception may be used to signify the cognition of an objective and external dimension of time, which could be represented, for example, by means of an hourglass or mechanical clock. The expression realistic perception of time refers here to the subjective and internal experience of time, biological and psychological time, which does not synchronize with clocks. One way of representing this is to depict a state of transition where past, present and future are suggested by one image or in consecutive images. The confrontation of the *Three Living and the Three Dead* suggested duration by linking the three parts of time in one continuum, as the oft accompanying inscription states: *sum quod eris, quod es olim fui*. Masaccio inserted this same inscription in Italian: *Io fugia quell che voi siete e quell che son voi a[n]co sarete*, above Adam's corpse in the *Holy Trinity* (Florence, Santa Maria Novella, ca. 1427–28). Among speculations regarding the symbolic connotations of Masaccio's fresco it has been suggested that the architectural structure was meant to suggest a memorial tomb for the prior and patron, Benedetto di Domenico di Lanzo and his wife, or was conceived to serve as an illusionistic altar for their memorial services. The combination of the *memento mori* theme below and the triumphal arch above (symbolizing triumph over death) establish the analogy between the Resurrection of Christ and that anticipated by his devotees.

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<sup>47</sup> On the subject of change in early Christian writings, see Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, New York, 1955, 73–74; Jean Daniélou, *The Origins of Latin Christianity* (A History of Early Church Doctrine, vol. III) 1977, 251–58.

<sup>48</sup> See Lynn White Jr., "Natural Science and Naturalistic Art," *American Historical Review*, vol. 52, no. 3, 1947, 421–35.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE ROMANESQUE ZODIAC: ITS SYMBOLIC FUNCTION ON THE CHURCH FACADE

...no two cultures live conceptually in the same kind of time and space. Space and time, like language itself, are works of art, and like language they help condition and direct practical action.

Lewis Mumford<sup>1</sup>

Changes in the conception of time have been perceived by historians to be one of the important expressions of Renaissance in the twelfth century. Jacques Le Goff, Father Chenu and others have shown that these changes emanated from the new learning in the monastic and cathedral schools as well as from technological and social developments in the urban milieu.<sup>2</sup> Whether or not these changes are reflected in the art of the twelfth century has not been examined. It is my contention that the depiction of the zodiac on Romanesque church facades constitutes a visual expression of current conceptions of time. My first objective will be to explicate the connection between the monumental image of the zodiac and theories of time set forth in contemporary exegetical and philosophical texts. Upon this basis I propose to establish the specific iconographic function of the façade zodiacs.

In the past, authors, such as Marjorie Jean Panadero and Jan van der Meulen, have dealt with the problem of the Romanesque zodiac by relating to issues of theological speculation prior to and during the twelfth century with an emphasis on continuity rather than change during that period.<sup>3</sup> Conversely, I wish to emphasize the conceptual changes

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization* New York (1934), 1940 repr. 1963, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century: essays on new theological perspectives in the Latin West*, Chicago, 1968, esp., 1–98, 162–201; Jacques Le Goff, “Au Moyen Âge: Temps de l’église et temps du marchand,” *Annales*, XV, 1969, 417–33; Le temps du travail dans la ‘crise’ du XIV siècle: du temps médiéval au temps moderne, *Le Moyen Age*, LXIX, 1963, 597–613 and *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages*, Chicago & London, 1980.

<sup>3</sup> Marjorie J.H. Panadero, *The Labors of the Months and Signs of the Zodiac in Twelfth Century French Facades*, 2 vols., PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1984; Jan Van Der Meulen & N.W. Price, *The West Portals of Chartres Cathedral*, vol. I: *The Iconography of the Creation*, Wash. DC, 1981, 51–59.

manifested in the twelfth century, as it is these, in my opinion, which find expression in the façade sculpture.

### *The Earliest Monumental Zodiacs*

The earliest extant sculptural cycle still *in situ* is located at the monastery of the Sagra di San Michele in the Val di Susa (Figs. 30 & 31).<sup>4</sup> It is generally assigned to the second decade of the twelfth century. The zodiacs at Vézelay (Fig. 32) and Autun in Burgundy were probably sculpted just a few years later (ca. 1125–1135).<sup>5</sup> These were followed after a decade or more by zodiacal cycles in the region of Saintonge-Poitou on the churches of St. Pierre at Aulnay (Fig. 33), St. Hilaire of Melle, St. Gilles at Argenton Château, Notre Dame of Fenioux, St. Léger at Cognac and St. Nicholas at Civray.<sup>6</sup> The Zodiacs at St. Denis (ca. 1137–1140) and Chartres (ca. 1145–1155) (Fig. 34) are more or less contemporary with the signs sculpted at



Fig. 30. *Signs of the Zodiac*, jambs of the *Porta del Zodiac*, Sagra di San Michele, Monastery, 12th c.

Ely Cathedral (ca. 1135) and on Kilpeck Church in Herefordshire (ca. 1140), which are the earliest known examples of this theme in English monu-

<sup>4</sup> See Christine Verzar, *Die Romanischen Skulpturen der Abtei Sagra di San Michele*, Bern, 1968.

<sup>5</sup> Adolf Katzenellenbogen, The Central Tympanum at Vézelay, *Art Bulletin*, XXVI, 1944, 141–51; Francis Salet, *La Madeleine de Vézelay*, Melun, 1949; Michael D. Taylor, "The Pentacost at Vézelay," *Gesta*, 1980, 9–15 and D. Grivot & G. Zarnecki, *Gislebertus, Sculptor of Autun*, London, 1980.

<sup>6</sup> See J.C. Webster, *Labors of the Months in Antique and Medieval Art to the End of the Twelfth Century*, Princeton, 1938 and Linda Seidel, *Songs of Glory*, Chicago & London, 1981, 53–54, figs. 11, 35, 40, 48, 51.





Fig. 31. *Porta del Zodiaco*, Sagra di San Michele, Monastery, 12th c.

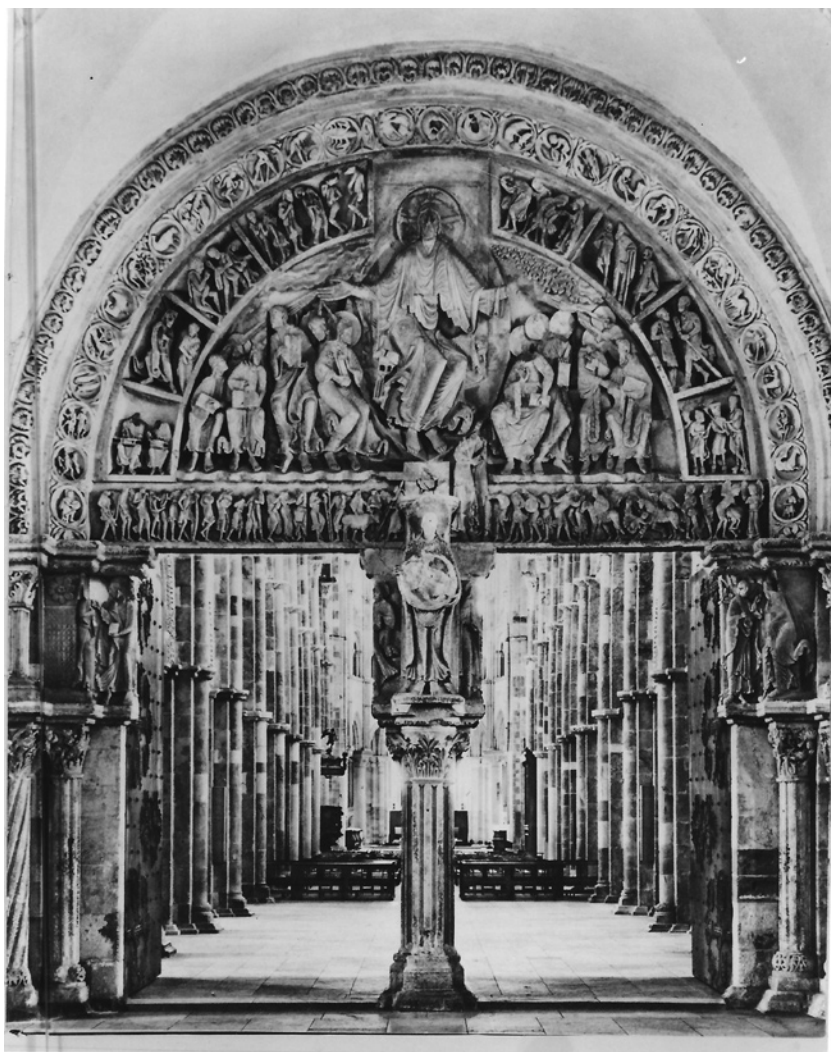


Fig. 32. *La Madeleine*, Vézelay, tympanum of the central portal, ca. 1125–1135.



Fig. 33. *St. Pierre, Aulnay, archivolt of the central portal, ca. 1145. Photo: Jean Feuillie, © C.N.M.H.S. / S.P.A.D.E.M.*



Fig. 34. *Chartres Cathedral, portals on the west façade, ca. 1145–1155.*

mental sculpture.<sup>7</sup> Another series is found at St. Margaret's church in York.<sup>8</sup> The sculpted zodiac of San Isidoro in León is attributed to the second quarter of the twelfth century.<sup>9</sup>

From the above we have a picture of at least fifteen stone zodiacs that were carved within a period of thirty or forty years in the region which extends from northwestern Italy through western and central France to northern Spain and parts of England. The chronological sequence of this dispersion can more or less be charted, but in many cases it is not at all evident that earlier sculpted zodiacs directly or indirectly influenced later ones. Various studies have shown that several of the early zodiac series (e.g. at San Michele or Kilpeck) were sculpted independently on the basis of local models in different media. The fact that these zodiacs, which were sculpted within a fairly limited period in different parts of Europe, did not evolve from a common source will be considered in regard to their iconographic interpretation.

### *The Symbolic Context of the Portal Zodiac*

One of the outstanding features of these portal zodiacs, taken as a group, is the variety of their iconographic contexts. The zodiac framed tympana of central France all focus on the figure of Christ, but each depicts a different event—the Pentacost at Vézelay, the Last Judgment at Autun and the Ascension at Chartres.<sup>10</sup> In western France the themes accompanying the zodiac on portal archivolts are fairly consistent, but these do not correspond to the programs of Burgundy and the Ile de France. Labors of the

<sup>7</sup> See Louis-Eugène Lefèvre, "Le calendrier-zodiaque du portail royal de Chartres et les influences mithraïques," *Revue Archéologique*, s.V, XXVI, 1927, 207–32; Whitney S. Stoddard, *The West Portals of St. Denis and Chartres*, Cambridge, Mass., 1952; Willibald Saurländer, *Die Kathedrale von Chartres*, Stuttgart, 1954 and "Zu den Westportalen von Chartres," *Kunstchronik*, IX, 1956, 155–56; Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral: Christ, Mary, Ecclesia*, Baltimore, 1968; 20, 24–25, 75, 112, n.67, 114, n. 88; Paula Lieber Gerson, *The West Façade of St. Denis: An Iconographic Study*, PhD diss., Columbia University, 1970 and Pamela L. Blum, "The Lateral Portals of the West Façade of the Abbey Church of St. Denis," in P. Lieber Gerson (ed.), *Abbot Sugar and St. Denis*, New York, 1986, 199–227.

<sup>8</sup> See Webster (as in note 6), 91–92, 174.

<sup>9</sup> John Williams, "San Isidoro in León: Evidence for a New history," *Art Bulletin*, LV, 1973, 170–84; Serafin Moralejo Alvarez, "Pour l'interprétation iconographique du portail de l'agneau à San-Isidore de León: Les signes du zodiaque," *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michele-de-Cuxa*, XVIII, 1977, 137–73.

<sup>10</sup> For a different interpretation of the left portal at Chartres, see Van der Meulen & Price (as in note 3).



months, virtues and vices, elders, apostles and wise and foolish virgins are most common in western France. The zodiac is associated with the *agnus dei* on some of these archivolts and on two different portals at San Isidoro in León.<sup>11</sup> The signs at the monastery of San Michele and at St. Denis, which are located on doorway jambs, are physically detached from other symbolic images but are juxtaposed with related cycles of constellations and monthly activities.

The assumption that these zodiacs were produced under various local influences precludes the use of one class of sources as valid evidence in all cases. The exegetical and philosophical texts, which will be presented, were products of the intellectual milieu of monastic and cathedral schools in Burgundy and the Île de France.<sup>12</sup> The literature will therefore be adduced to support my argument in regard to Vézelay, Autun, St. Denis and Chartres. Nevertheless, particular characteristics shared by these zodiacal cycles and those at Saintonge-Poitou or San Michele, for example, suggest that a common denominator binds the diverse iconographic contexts of most monumental zodiacs.

### Omnia Tempus Habent

Discussions of time cover many more pages of the patristic literature of the twelfth century than in the previous centuries following St. Augustine. These discussions differ in form, content and approach as they draw from varied philosophical, pseudo-scientific and theological precedents.<sup>13</sup> Alongside traditional worn-out formulas are to be found new approaches and novel issues. The one common element in this diversity is the magnified emphasis on time and the increasing importance attached to it.

St. Augustine had made the first fundamental attempt to define time and eternity as a fundamental theological issue with moral implications.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Regarding the León portals, see Williams (as in note 9).

<sup>12</sup> Whether or not these texts are directly related to the artistic production of the churches in England or in western France is still an open question. On local influences in the art of western France, see Seidel (as in note 6).

<sup>13</sup> On sources and influences in twelfth century patristic writings, see Jean-Marie Parment, *La Doctrine de la Création dans l'École de Chartres*, Paris & Ottawa, 1938, 95–106, 125–26, 143 and Chenu (as in note 2), 1–145, 162–201.

<sup>14</sup> Augustine's speculations on time are found mainly in the following: *De genesi contra manichaeos*, *De Genesi ad litteram*, *Confessiones*, *De civitate dei* and *De trinitate*. See Henri-Irénée Marrou, *L'ambivalence du temps et de l'histoire chez Saint-Augustine*, Montreal, 1950; Jean Guitton, *Le temps et l'éternité chez Plotinus et Saint-Augustine*, Paris, 1957,

The profundity and scope of these speculations were lost on his followers, however his negative attitude towards time was perpetuated by them. We have seen that in the attempt to define time Augustine actually denied its existence. According to his logic, the past no longer exists, the future is yet to be and the present, if it is truly present, is by virtue of its immobility eternity.<sup>15</sup> To avoid the absurd conclusion that time can be confirmed only in its tendency to be dissolved, the three parts of time were relegated to the realm of psychic experience as memory, attention and expectation.<sup>16</sup> Augustine believed that the temporal element in human consciousness causes mental confusion and moral transgression. The mental state of temporality distracts man from contemplation of the divine and therefore must be transcended.<sup>17</sup> His mystical striving led him to deny the very meaning and value of time-bound phenomena. The effect of these ideas will be demonstrated in later theological writings.

The hexaemeral commentaries on the fourth day of Creation, as related in *Genesis*, I, 14, have been shown to illustrate the inherent connection between time and stellar constellations (i.e. the zodiac) in Christian thought.<sup>18</sup> By studying these exegetical texts in their chronological order from the fifth to the twelfth century, I sought to discover whether twelfth century writers differed from their predecessors and, if so, in what way. The passage under discussion reads: "And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons and for days and years". The last part in the Latin translation reads: "*et sint in signa et tempora, et dies et annos*". Medieval commentators prior to the twelfth century interpreted this more or less in accordance with certain definitions set forth by St. Augustine in his *De Genesi ad litteram*.<sup>19</sup> They avoided the complexities

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ch. VIII; Theodor E. Mommsen, "St. Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress," *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, ch. XII, 265–98 and Robert A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*, Cambridge, 1970.

<sup>15</sup> *Confessiones*, XI, xiv, Migne, P.L. XXXII.

<sup>16</sup> "*Sunt enim haec in anima tua quaedam, et alibi eo non video, praesens de praeteritis memoria, praesens de praesentibus contuitus, praesens de futuris expectatio*, *Ibid.*, chap. XX, cf. chap. XXVIII.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. XXIX.

<sup>18</sup> Panadero (as in note 3), 186–210.

<sup>19</sup> "*Et sint in signa et in tempora, et dies et annos* (*Gen. I, 14*) was interpreted by Augustine as follows: "*An in signis dixit, quibus certum iter significatur navigandi; in temporibus autem, velut est verum tempus, et aestes, et autumnus, et heims, quia est ista circumactio siderum variantur, suasque vices atque ordinum servant*", *De Genesi ad litteram*, Migne P.L. XXXIV. Col. 236, chap. XIII, 38.

implicit in the interpretation of *tempora* as times rather than seasons and rephrased Augustine's comments on the practical applications of observing the stars and on man's ability to distinguish one season or period from another due to the imposition of order on vicissitude. Authors such as Bede (8th c.), Rabanus Maurus (9th c.), and Honorius Augustodunensis (12th c.) comment on the biblical passage by reciting the technical and applicable aspects of calculating dates through stellar observation.<sup>20</sup> Their commentaries belong with the so-called computus texts to which Bede and Rabanus Maurus were known contributors.<sup>21</sup> For these and other medieval commentators time was synonymous with days, seasons or years, that is to say, with temporal units as they were conceived by man. In keeping with this conceptualist approach, time was never defined as an entity in itself. Augustine hypothesized that time could have existed prior to being observed in the stars (i.e. before the fourth day of Creation) but, with the exception of Rabanus Maurus, this idea was subsequently ignored or contradicted.<sup>22</sup>

Isidore of Seville, in his commentary on *Genesis*, interpreted *signa* both metaphorically and literally.<sup>23</sup> Thus stars symbolize the virtues and miracles of the church but also mark the seasons and years associated with human transience as opposed to the eternity of God's work. Like his contemporaries, Isidore omitted a definition of time and elsewhere even stated that time cannot be perceived *per se* but only as a medium of human activity: "*nam tempus per se non intellegitur, nisi per actus*

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<sup>20</sup> Bede, *Hexaameron*, Migne, P.L. XCI, col. 23; Rabanus Maurus, *Commentaria in Genesim*, Migne, P.L. CVII, col. 453; Honorius Augustodunensis, *Hexaameron*, Migne, P.L. CLXXII, col. 257. Honorius wrote: "In signa sunt quoque navigantibus et in arenosis regionibus iter agentibus. In tempora vero sunt aequinoctia, et solstitia certa dimensione veris, aestas, autumnus et hiemis proferunt". Cf. note 19.

<sup>21</sup> Bede, *De tempore ratione; De temporibus liber*; Rabanus Maurus, *De computo*.

<sup>22</sup> Augustine, *De Genesi contra manichaeos*, Migne, P.L. XXXIV, col. 183; Rabanus Maurus, *Commentaria* (as in note 20). For a contradictory interpretation, see Hugh of Rouen (as in note 30).

<sup>23</sup> "Protulit etiam et caeteram micantium siderum turbam, id est diversarum virtutum in Ecclesia numerositatem, quae in hujus vitae obscuritate tanquam in nocte refulgentes, dividant in hoc firmamento Scripturae sensibilia et intelligibilia, quasi iter lucem perfectorum et tenebras parvulorum, et sint in signis virtutum et miraculorum, sint etiam in tempora et annos, quid praedictatore proprius temporibus vivunt et transeunt, verbum autem manet in aeternum." Isidore of Seville, *Questiones in Genesios librum*, Migne, P.L. LXXXIII, col. 207.

*humanos*".<sup>24</sup> Consequently, the middle of the night is called *intempesta* (without time) because it lacks activity by which time is distinguished.<sup>25</sup>

The twelfth century hexaemeral commentaries do not represent a sudden break in this tradition. Honorius Augustodunensis still interpreted *tempora* as seasons and enumerated the practical uses of *signa* for calculating Easter, for navigation and travel, and for predicting the weather.<sup>26</sup> His approach was typically pragmatic.

Nevertheless, problems posed by the biblical passage were redefined by some of his contemporaries. The naturalists were beginning to absorb Aristotelian ideas. As Joseph Marie Parent demonstrated in his classic study on Chartres, the Neoplatonists endeavored to define time in accordance with the concepts of the *Timaeus*, which was then undergoing a revival.<sup>27</sup> Some adherents of both schools were re-evaluating the issues of time and temporality as problems of moral philosophy.

Despite his basically pragmatic approach, Peter Abelard's *Expositio in Hexaemeron* introduces two statements about time which are original in this context. He wrote of time-reckoning as the measure and numbering of motion, the motion being that of the solar and other planetary revolutions.<sup>28</sup> He was also the first commentator to state that *dies* and *annus* are presented solely *per exempla*, thus indirectly distinguishing the broader concept of time from specific time units. His comments seem to reflect the knowledge of Aristotle's *Physics*.<sup>29</sup>

In his *Tractatus in Hexaemeron* Hugh of Rouen questioned how it came about that God suddenly created mutable things which he set in motion (i.e. the world). In his answer he differentiated between the conception of

<sup>24</sup> *Etymologiarum sive originum*, V, 31, 8. ed. W.M. Lindsay, Oxford, 1971. On this subject see Jacques Leclercq, "Experience and Interpretation of Time in the Middle Ages," *Studies in Medieval Cultures*, V, 1975, 9–19.

<sup>25</sup> "*Medium actum noctis caret. Ergo intempesta, inactuosa, quasi sine tempora, hoc est sine actu, per quem dinoscitur tempus,*" *ibid.*, V, 31, 10. This is quoted by Rabanus Maurus, *De computo*, XXII, in John McCulloh (ed.), *Corpus Christianorum*, 44, Turnhout, 1978, 225; reprint 1997.

<sup>26</sup> Honorius, *Hexaemeron*, Migne, P.L. CLXXII, col. 257.

<sup>27</sup> Parent (as in note 13).

<sup>28</sup> "*Hoc est temporum computationem, sicut dierum vel annorum, quae statim per exempla supponit; dies enim computamus atque numeramus secundum motus et discursus solis ab oriente in occidentem, et annos secundum revolutiones ejus; et nonnunquam caeterorum planetarum computare solemus, et quod videlicet revolutiones sunt eorum ad idem punctum, tot annos solis vel Saturni vel aliorum planetarum dicamus,*" Abelard (d. 1142), *Expositio in Hexaemeron*, Migne P.L. CLXXVIII, col. 751.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, IV, xiv, 223a 28 & 223b. This was among the many works translated from Arabic into Latin, in Toledo, by Gerard of Cremona (ca. 1114–1187).



time, which is defined by words like 'before' or 'suddenly', and the physical reality of time as the attribute of motion.<sup>30</sup> We have noted that his predecessors conceived of time solely in terms of human observation or experience and not as a physical reality *per se*. Contrary to St. Augustine, Hugh of Rouen concluded that time could not have existed before God set things in motion. His argument was based on a scientific theory of time rather than on the authority of Scripture.

Arnold, the abbot of Bonneval near Chartres, was the proponent of the belief in divine cosmic unity, and conceived time and space to be divinely created dimensions to which all nature is subjected. Arnold described the origin and role of time in the universe in unprecedented terms of reverence. In reply to the controversial question regarding the beginning of time, he claimed the world could not have been created before time. Even though time was derived from the formlessness and void that is called chaos, its beginning expressed divine omnipotence, wisdom and goodness. Without time the universe would have been a weak and imperfect creation, he argued, and had there been imperfection in his work "there would not have been any glory for the creator".<sup>31</sup> Thus everything in the universe is bounded and given form by time and space. These are contemplated by man in his inability to fathom the eternal nature because they are reflections of the divine.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> "Sed scire te convenit quia ante vel subito, quae propones, signa sunt temporis; Deus vero rei et rerum tempora facit, ea ipsa non tempore sed aeternitate praecedunt. Res equidem si nulla esset, nec motus rerum, esse potuisset; si motus rerum nullus esset, nec tempus utique fuisset. Tempus namque terminatum esse dicitur intervallum mutationis rerum. Non est ergo subditis temporibus qui tempora fecit, sed omnia aeternitate praecedunt. Quaecunque igitur sunt mutabilia nulla a Deo sunt coaeterna sed a Deo condita, sed initium de nihilo simul habentia", Hugh of Rouen (d. 1164), *Tractatus in Hexaemeron*, Migne, P.L. CLXXXII, col. 1251.

<sup>31</sup> "Aeternum quidem de tam magnifico opera in Sapientia ejus fuit consilium, sed initium temporale nequaquam confusione illa quae chaos dicitur latuit involutum, nec omnipotentiam vel sapientiam, vel benignitatem Conditoris materiam factam languore (decuit) opprimere . . . quia in imperfectione operis sui nulla est gloria Conditori, neque ipsa creatura insensibilis et inanimata vel defectum in hoc vel profectum haberet, cui sine aliquo sui damno illa informitas vel inutilitas esset: unde constat aptata rerum primordia, verbo dei . . .", Arnold of Bonneval (d. 1156?), *Hexaemeron*, Migne, P.L. CLXXXIX, col. 1515. On this subject see Parent (as in note 13).

<sup>32</sup> "Aperta est janua et egressa de illa antique arcae testamenti multitudo innumerabilis visibilium et invisibilium, spiritualium et corporalium, et jam coepit locus esse et tempus, quoniam secundum suum modum omnia conscriptioni obnoxia sunt, praeter illam solam naturam, quae praecedunt et excedunt omnia, et intra se universa concludit. Circa illam ineffabilem et immensurabilem magnitudinem vane cogitat homo loca vel tempora, omnino minor est auctore universitas et quidquid temporale est, ad instar puncti, intra se concludit aeternitas", *ibid.*, col. 1515.

Arnold's attitude and emphasis on time was not unique in Neoplatonist circles. We know that his peers at Chartres, who were also preoccupied with defining the rapports between time and eternity, took similar stands in regard to time's creation and its elevated status.<sup>33</sup> Despite their differences, both Neoplatonists and Aristotelians assumed that a basic principle underlies manifestations of temporal vicissitude. In the one case this principle was conceived to be a World Soul, in the other it was mechanistic. Both groups attempted to define time without equating it to specific periods or periodic divisions and entirely divorced the issue from questions of human perception or experience.

An apologetic tone regarding the *signa* in several twelfth century hexaemeral commentaries is likewise symptomatic of changing attitudes. There appear to be no precedents for this in early commentaries. In a well known passage, Rupert of Deutz argued that the uneducated will be "inspired to serve God in the holy Church of Christ" by observing "the signs of the hours".<sup>34</sup> Rupert quoted the Psalm "Praise ye the Lord from the heavens praise him in the heights" to emphasize that time-producing revolutions of the celestial bodies were manifestations of the divine and should be worshipped as such.<sup>35</sup>

A comment by Abelard regarding the *signa* also suggests that it was necessary to justify the observation of heavenly bodies for time-reckoning. His exegesis reads: "And for signs, not signs to observe in vain for the sake of auspices or augury but signs of certain manifestations of future or present events".<sup>36</sup> These statements by Rupert of Deutz and Abelard probably reflect the current revival of astrology, which Rupert attacked in his text,<sup>37</sup> but they likewise defend an approach to time which to some of their contemporaries might still seem unorthodox.

<sup>33</sup> E.g. William of Conches; in Parent (as in note 13), esp. 40–43, 95–106, 143 and Chenu (as in note 2), esp. 57–60.

<sup>34</sup> "*Et sint, inquit in signa et tempora, dies et annos. Quatuor dicta, sunt signa, tempora, dies et annos. Horum tria scilicet signa, tempora et dies ad solem pertinent, quia videlicet ex ipso percipiuntur, maxime horarum signa, quas com observer rusticana quoque plebecula, magis ad serviendum Deo religiosa considerat Christi ecclesia, et secundum ipsum variantur veris, aestas, atque autumnus et hyemis tempora,*" Rupert of Deutz, *Commentariorum in Genesim*, Migne, P.L. CLXVII, col. 236ff.

<sup>35</sup> "*Dicuntur enim et istorum luminarium et coeterorum planetarum circuli coelu, qui laudant Dominum, juxta Psalmistam dicentem: Laudate eum, coeli coelorum . . .*", *ibid.*, col. 235.

<sup>36</sup> "*Et signa, non quae vanitatis est observare, sicut in auspiciis atque auguriis, sed in quasdam naturales ostensiones futurorum eventuum sive praesentium.*" Abelard, *Expositio in Hexameron* (as in note 28).

<sup>37</sup> Migne, P.L. CLXVII, col. 238.

Philosophical speculations on time were not limited to hexaemeral commentaries. They began to appear in other exegetical texts, in doctrinal and historiographic literature and in mystical writings during the first half of the century and later. Time is a recurrent theme in the works of Hugh of Saint-Victor. In the *Didascalion* he expresses a sense of wonder and admiration before the divine process of renewal whereby the world, while constantly changing its appearance through the succession of time (i.e. days, nights and seasons), preserves the immutable law of mutability.<sup>38</sup> The *signa*, in that they are the means by which these successions are observed, reveal the *magna naturae ratio*.<sup>39</sup>

In a chapter of the *Didascalion* entitled *De tribus rerum differentiis* Hugh differentiated between *aeterna* (that which has neither beginning nor end), *perpetua* (those things that have a beginning but no end) and *temporalia* (those which have both beginning and end, i.e. terrestrial things).<sup>40</sup> The themes themselves were not new but the interpretation was.<sup>41</sup> Hugh stated that the super-lunar world was called 'time', on account of the stellar revolutions, and the sub-lunar world 'temporal' because it is set in motion by those superior motions. According to Hugh, it was said that time pertained to the realm of primordial law, perpetual light and tranquility, also called 'elysium'. Unlike his early Christian predecessors, he differentiated between time and temporal.

Three significant points should be noted here. Time was neither negated nor negative, it was associated with the concept of *perpetua* (that which has a beginning but no end) and it was established by the revolutions of the celestial sphere. Hugh, like most of his contemporaries, was defining time as a cosmic dimension, which came into being with the creation of the world and would cease only with its end,<sup>42</sup> but he relegated the negative connotations of vicissitude to the *temporalia* that were located in the sub-lunar realm.

<sup>38</sup> Hugh of Saint-Victor, *Didascalion*, lib. VII, vi: *De dispositione temporum*, Migne, *P.L.* CLXXVI, col. 816, ed. J. Taylor, New York & London, 1961.

<sup>39</sup> *De arca Noe mystica*, lib. II, xv: *De proprietate quatuor temporum anni*, Migne, *P.L.* CLXXVI, col. 701.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, coll. 745–746.

<sup>41</sup> The dichotomy between time and eternity had constituted the basis for definitions of the nature of God and his creations from Augustine on and the concept of *aetas perpetua* had already been discussed by Boethius. See Augustine, *Confessiones*, XI, xiii, Migne, *P.L.* XXXII, col. 815; trans. W. Watts, London & Cambridge (Mass.), 1960; Boethius, *Consolatione philosophiae*, V, vi, Migne, *P.L.* XLIII, col. 579, trans. W.V. Cooper, New York, 1943 and Augustine, *De Genesi* (as in note 22).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 38b.

In *De vanitate mundi* and Homilies on the Book of Ecclesiastes he elaborated on the moral implications of temporal transience. Hugh distinguished between the temporal *sub coelo* and the eternal *in ipso coelo*: "All things have their time and all that is under the sky passes through its allotted duration of time. For the sky itself measures these durations of time, and whatever is under the sky passes with time, and the sky itself, from which time derives, is not transient. It is as though time is from the sky itself and within the sky itself there is no time: and though all things that are under the sky take their time from the sky, within the sky itself eternity persists".<sup>43</sup>

The leitmotif of caducity was expressed in temporal terms. Man was subject to the laws of time—to change and vicissitude.<sup>44</sup> While he had to bear equivocally the good and bad in the temporal flux of terrestrial existence, his acts would be taken into account on the Day of Judgment and reward would be found in the celestial realm of eternity.

These writings reflect a fundamental change of attitude. The twelfth century writers explicitly associated stellar constellations (i.e. *signa*) with cosmic time as a divine creation. *Signa* were visible symbols of the ineffable divine nature, or as Hugh of Saint-Victor put it, revealed the *magna naturae ratio*. It must be emphasized that the stars were thought to reflect the divine not by virtue of themselves but as manifestations of the working of time. All of the texts quoted are clear on this point. Although some vestiges remain of the negative conceptions found in earlier patristic writings, they nevertheless represent a departure from that tradition. In order to avoid the seeming contradiction between time as a divine manifestation and temporal vicissitude, with all its evil connotations, Hugh differentiated 'time' from 'temporal', both as cosmic and moral categories.

### *The Medieval Zodiac*

Based on the literary evidence alone, we could tentatively assume that the significance of the zodiac as a time-image in pre-Romanesque art

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<sup>43</sup> "*Omnia tempus habent et suis spatiis transeunt universa sub coelo. Nam et ipsum coelum omnium temporum spatia metitur, et omnia quae sub coelo sunt tempore transeunt, et non transit ipsum coelum a quo est tempus. Quasi enim ex ipso coelo tempus est; et in ipso coelo tempus non est; et cum omnia quae sub coelo sunt tempus accipiant de coelo, in ipso tamen coelo aeternitas constant.*" In *Salomonis Ecclesiasten, Homilia, XIX*, Migne, P.L. CLXXXV, col. 207.

<sup>44</sup> "*Quid causeris sub tempore omnes de legibus temporum? Temporis est subiacere mutabilitati et pati vicissitudinem.*" *Ibid.*



would be different from that in Romanesque art. This is confirmed by the visual evidence, which indicates that there are no medieval precedents for adopting the zodiac in those specific iconographic contexts found on the Romanesque portals and that the particular symbolic adaptations of the zodiac in pre-Romanesque religious art were largely abandoned by Romanesque artists. Nevertheless, writers have supported their interpretations of the Romanesque zodiac on early medieval artistic and textual evidence. In my opinion, they have not recognized the difference between zodiacs depicted in allegorical, cosmological or celestial contexts and those used to depict time. I would like to illustrate this distinction.

Formal and symbolic analogies have been noted between the circular *imago mundi*, which illustrates scientific and encyclopedic manuscripts throughout the Middle Ages and the semicircular schemes of the Romanesque tympana.<sup>45</sup> Both contain concentric bands of symbolic images that radiate from the god-figure in the center to the zodiac on the periphery. But here the analogy ends. The zodiac of the *imago mundi* represented the limit of the heavens and the universe and also conveyed the medieval concept of time, that is, of periodic changes that could be distinguished by means of the *signa*. These spatial and temporal associations are part of a world image conceived in terms of time, space and matter.<sup>46</sup> On the Romanesque portal, however, the zodiac combined with months functions as an autonomous iconographic element. The spatial and material components are lacking and the god-figure in the center is not related to the image of the universe but only to that of time.

Marjorie Hall Panadero presented evidence to show that the time-cycle was integrated into religious art as early as the ninth and tenth centuries.<sup>47</sup> In some of her examples the twelve signs of the zodiac belong to the allegorical depictions of Heavenly Jerusalem, in others they are used metaphorically.<sup>48</sup> I will suggest two criteria for distinguishing zodiacs which

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<sup>45</sup> The interpretation of the tympana complex as an *imago mundi* was set forth by Adolfe N. Didron, *Christian Iconography* (1st edit. Paris, 1843), trans. by E.J. Millington, New York, 1965, 1–19; Emile Mâle, *Religious Art in France*, (1st edit. Paris, 1922), trans. Harry Bober, Princeton, 1972, 317 and George M.A. Hanfmann, *The Season Sarcophagus in Dumbarton Oaks*, Cambridge, Mass. (1952) 1971, 268, 274.

<sup>46</sup> Cosmic space and matter were represented by cardinal points, winds, elements and the qualities of the elements combined. Besides the zodiac, activities of the months and seasons were the major representatives of cosmic time.

<sup>47</sup> Panadero (as in note 3), 127–32.

<sup>48</sup> In the first Bible of Charles the Bald, the Utrecht Psalter and the Bible of St. Vaast, the twelve signs of the zodiac depict Heavenly Jerusalem. The signs depicted on ivory caskets from Fulda are used as metaphors of the twelve apostles with whom they are paired. *Ibid.*,

represent the heavens, in a literal or allegorical sense, from those representing time. It has been found that approximately two out of three antique zodiac-cycles, whether circular or arched, run in a counterclockwise direction.<sup>49</sup> In terms of astronomical observation the depiction of a celestial zodiac might legitimately be oriented in either direction. The zodiac of time, however, runs clockwise in accordance with the apparent (but not actual) diurnal progression of the sun and with western norms of left to right orientation.<sup>50</sup> So even before the mechanical clock was invented, the circular or semicircular zodiac assumed a clockwise direction to represent time. The fact that medieval artists made this distinction is illustrated in an eleventh century copy of *De rerum naturis* by Rabanus Maurus, where a clockwise zodiac framing *Annus* illustrates a chapter dealing with time (Fig. 35) and a counterclockwise zodiac framing busts of *Sol* and *Luna* depicts the sky (Fig. 36).<sup>51</sup> Contrary to the other Romanesque portal zodiacs the signs at San Isidoro in León, which form a horizontal sequence, are ordered in a counterclockwise direction. This is an indication of their celestial associations.<sup>52</sup>

Not all zodiacs with a clockwise orientation depict time, but when they do, it appears that they are usually associated with other time-images, such as the months, the seasons, and the year. In fact, the earliest extant medieval time-zodiacs in circular form are part of concentric diagrams, which show the divisions of time framing the figure of *Annus*. While all

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231–33, notes 66, 67, 77, 129, note 29, fig. 60. See also on the Bible of St. Vaast: Walter Cahn, *Romanesque Bible Illumination*, Ithaca, 1982, 109–14, fig. 68; on the Bible of Charles the Bald: Robert G. Calkins, *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages*, London, 1983, 93–118, pl. 45.

<sup>49</sup> See Hans Georg Gundel, "Zodiacus," in *Realencyclopädie der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Pauly-Wissowa), X A.2, München 1972, 611–94.

<sup>50</sup> It was commonly repeated in antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages that the celestial sphere rotated from east to west while the sun and other planets proceed in the opposite direction, from west to east. See explanations in Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, I, XVIII, trans. W.H. Stahl, New York & London, 1966, 158–62; gloss on Bede's *De temporum ratione*, XVI, Migne, *P.L.* XC, coll. 363–65 and Honorius, *De philosophia mundi*, II, xxv, Migne, *P.L.* CLXXII, col. 65. The problem of the zodiac's orientation in antiquity is dealt with by Roger Beck, "Interpreting the Ponza Zodiac," *Journal of Mithraic Studies*, I, 1976, 1–19. Regarding the westward motion of the fixed stars towards the right (i.e. clockwise) and the eastward motion of the planets towards the left (i.e. counterclockwise), see Plato, *Timaeus*, 36c. On the apparent motion of the sun from east to west, see Macrobius (as above) and on the association of the east-west direction with the progression of time, see Honorius, *De imagine mundi*, I, xiv, Migne, *P.L.* CLXXII, col. 148.

<sup>51</sup> D.O. Le Berrurier, *The Pictorial Sources of Mythological and Scientific Illustrations of Hrabanus Maurus 'De rerum naturis'*, New York & London, 1978.

<sup>52</sup> This observation concurs with the general approach of Moralejo-Alvarez (as in note 9), who conceived of the cycle as an astrological or anti-astrological allegory.



Fig. 35. *Annus in a Zodiac*, illumination of *De Anno* in Rabanus Maurus, *De rerum naturis*, Archivio di Montecassino, cod. 132, fol. 135v.

the other time-motifs derive from antique prototypes, the origin of *Annus* has never been satisfactorily explained. Personified as a king (Figs. 35 & 15), a bearded old man, a seated youth or a crouching figure (Fig. 37), *Annus* is known as early as the tenth and eleventh centuries.<sup>53</sup> The proposition, set forth by Peter Springer and reiterated by Jan van der Meulen, that *Annus* derives from the image of the deity is incompatible with a considerable part of the visual evidence. In most depictions *Annus* not only lacks sacred attributes but is clearly differentiated from the god-figure.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> The earliest extant illustrations of *Annus*, which also contain the zodiac, are found in the following: the St. Cunibert altarcloth, Cologne, ca. 10th c.; the *De anno* illustration to Rabanus Maurus *De rerum naturis*, Montecassino, 11th c. (Fig. 35), the Creation tapestry, Gerona Cathedral, early 12th c. (Fig. 18), an illustration of the *Chronicon Zwifaltense*, Stuttgart, Landesbibliothek, cod. Hist. fol. 415, 17v, ca. mid.12th c. (Fig. 16), and the illumination in Hildegard's *Liber divinorum*, 12th c. Among the many reproductions of the above, see those in Raymond Van Marle, *Iconographie de l'art profane au moyen âge et à la Renaissance*, II (1931), New York, 1971, figs. 368–61, and Springer (as in note 54).

<sup>54</sup> Peter Springer, "Trinitas-Creator-Annus," *Wallraf-Richartz Jahrbuch*, XXXVIII, 1976, 17–45; Van der Meulen & Price (as in note 3), 55–59. Springer's association of the personified year with the god-figure as creator was based on the version of *Annus* holding the



Fig. 36. *Sol and Luna in a Zodiac*, illumination of *De coelo* in Rabanus Maurus, *De rerum naturis*, Archivio di Montecassino, cod. 132, fol. 118r.



Fig. 37. *Annus*, Church of St. Lazare, Autun, detail of the outer archivolt above the portal.



I suggest that *Annus* derives from a literary rather than a visual source, which may incidentally explain why he assumed varied forms. In the earliest known illustrations to *De rerum naturis*, to which I have referred, the chapter *De anno* is illustrated by a bust of *Annus* wearing a crown and framed by a zodiac (Fig. 35).<sup>55</sup> In his text Rabanus quoted a passage from the Book of *Psalms*, which reads: “*Benedices coronam anni benignitatis tuae*”.<sup>56</sup> If this text is indeed the source of the crowned *Annus*, which seems to be his earliest form, could it be the source for the entire scheme? In her studies of the illustrations to the *De rerum naturis*, Diane Le Berrurier concluded that the Carolingian archetypes contained the elements of the time-diagram known to us from later derivations.<sup>57</sup> An even more likely source would be the text of *De computo*, where Rabanus Maurus elaborated on the revolution of the year, the months, and other parts of time on the circular path of the zodiac.<sup>58</sup> The literal definition of time in terms of its constituent parts was distinguished by Rabanus from the allegorical associations, of which he was well aware, and this approach found expression in a whole series of diagrammatic illustrations in which the zodiac was reinstated as a time-image. The illustrations, like the text of *De computo*, were related to the terminology of *Genesis*, I, 14.<sup>59</sup> Consequently, they contain all the elements of the biblical passage—*signa, tempora, dies, nox* and *annus*.<sup>60</sup> But the divine creator is absent. None of the pre-Romanesque illustrations depict God as the creator and ruler of time, nor do they introduce other elements of sacred iconography. The

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two medallions (of *Dies* and *Nox* or *Sol* and *Luna*), which he interpreted as a Trinitarian image. I disagree with his thesis on the following grounds: 1) *Annus* is generally depicted without sacred attributes. 2) The conflation of *Annus* and the god-figure in what appear to be later depictions constitutes a deviation from the visual prototypes, as in note 53. 3. The fact that *Annus* sometimes follows a Creation image shows that he is associated with *Gen.* I, 14, where the year is mentioned among the parts of time that were created, but not as the creator.

<sup>55</sup> See note 51.

<sup>56</sup> *De rerum naturis*, Migne, P.L. CXI, col. 306: “Thou crowneth the year with thy goodness...” (*Psalms* 65, 11). Both the Latin and English translations above introduce the crown motif that is not implicit in the original Hebrew text.

<sup>57</sup> Le Berrurier (as in note 51), 92–96.

<sup>58</sup> McCulloch (as in note 25), esp. XXVIII, *De mensibus*, 231–32; xxxv, *De annis*, 245; xxxviii, *De plantarum cursu per signiferum et natura signiferi*, 249–50.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, I *De numerum potentia*, 206.

<sup>60</sup> E.g. the St. Cunibert altarcloth, which according to Le Berrurier is related to the Rabanus Maurus illustrations, contains all the elements of the biblical passage: *signa* (the zodiac), *tempora* (busts of seasons and elements), *dies* and *nox* (solar and lunar busts) and *annus* (the year personified). The qualities of the elements are explained by Rabanus as the medium for differentiating between the seasons.

zodiacal band illustrates the function of the fixed stars in observing and calculating time, just as medieval writers had described it.

### *The Architectural Context of the Zodiac*

The redefinition of time formulated in theological writings during the first half of the twelfth century corresponds to the initial integration of the time-cycle in religious iconography and to its earliest association with the Christian god-figure. This provides a frame of reference for interpreting the specific function of the zodiac in the tympana programs. Scholars have assumed that this function changes in accordance with the program to which the zodiac is adapted. They have not considered the possibility that its architectural context contributes to its meaning.

The zodiacs that are the object of this study constitute an integral part of the church portal. Whereas most of the themes sculpted on church exteriors at this time, especially in France, were concentrated on the portal, it is noteworthy that zodiacs could also be depicted elsewhere.<sup>61</sup> There are examples in church art of alternative placements as, for example, on baptismal fonts or pavements.<sup>62</sup>

At the monastery of San Michele the cycle of the zodiac and signs of other constellations are carved on pilasters that are attached to the inner jambs of an arched portal (Figs.30 & 31). An inscription carved beside the constellations reads: "*Hoc opus intendat quisquis bonus exi[t et entrat]*".<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> The contemporary church of St. Austremoine of Issoire has signs of the zodiac exceptionally placed on the chevet exterior. See Zygmunt Swiechowski, *Sculture Romane d'Auvergne*, Clermont Ferrand, 1973, 38–39, figs. 32–43.

<sup>62</sup> Remains or documents of twelfth century Italian pavement mosaics containing zodiacs include those of the following churches: S. Savino, Piacenza; the Cathedral of Aosta; S. Prospero, Reggio-Emilia; S. Benedetto Po; S. Michele, Pavia; S. Colombano, Bobbio; S. Salvatore, Torino and S. Donato, Murano. In the church of Novara there existed a ceiling mosaic with 12 constellations or stars. The earliest known zodiac on the pavement of a medieval church, of which fragments remain, was located in the choir of the abbey church of St. Bertin at St. Omer and bore the date 1109. See H. Stern, "Recueil general de mosaïques de la Gaule," *Gallia*, suppl. X, 1, I, Paris, 1957, 97, plates L–LIV. Regarding zodiacs on baptismal fonts, see George Zarnecki, *English Romanesque Lead Sculpture, Lead Fonts of the Twelfth Century*, New York, 1973, 17–19, 37–38, figs. 56–70 and Moralejo-Alvarez (as in note 9), 152–67, fig.18. Regarding the octagonal column from the Cluniac abbey church of Souvigny, decorated with months and signs of the zodiac as well as other images, see Mâle (as in note 45), 323–25 and John Evans, *Cluniac Art of the Romanesque Period*, Cambridge, 1950, 28. Signs of the zodiac were identified on stone reliefs from Brauweiler (ca. 1060). It is thought that these were originally placed on the exterior of the former Benedictine abbey church. See Millard F. Hearn, *Romanesque Sculpture*, Oxford, 1981, 57–59, pl. 36.

<sup>63</sup> "Let all good men who enter or exit pay good attention to this work".

The sculptural decoration of this portal is concentrated on its inner faces and, except for some historiated capitals, contains no other figurative images. Therefore when the sculptor Niccolò stated that his work was to be seen by those who entered or departed, he associated the stellar imagery with the function of the portal. This association was repeated and defined in an inscription carved beside the zodiac: "*Vos qui transitis sursum vel forte reditis*".<sup>64</sup> The portal leading to the *scalone dei morti*, a passageway to a sepulchral substructure, is meant for those who make the passage upwards (i.e. to heaven). Thus the star studded doorway is the passageway for those who will be saved. Abbot Sugar expressed related ideas in the inscriptions he chose for the doors at St. Denis, which were framed by the zodiacal signs and the months. This work, he wrote: "*Clarificet mentes, ut eant per lumina vera ad verum lumen, ubi Christus janua vera . . . Mens hebes ad verum per materialia surgit, et demersa prius hac visa luce resurgit*".<sup>65</sup> In illustrating Sugar's anagogical approach, Panofsky interpreted this to mean that the soul will be guided by the reliefs (*lumina vera*) to Christ (*verum lumen*) "and will thus be 'raised' or 'resurrected' (*surgit, resurgit*) from terrestrial bondage".<sup>66</sup> He also showed that the derivation of these passages from John the Scot, who wrote of the *materialia lumina* as those disposed by nature in the heavens as well as those produced by humans on earth. Consequently, it appears to me that the lights which guide the soul refer not only to the door reliefs but also to the stellar depictions on their frame.

The door was frequently used in allegories of Resurrection or Salvation.<sup>67</sup> The metaphor "gate of the Lord" was associated with the church portal and signified the passage that awaited the righteous, from this world to heaven.<sup>68</sup> We have seen that heaven in both its physical and

<sup>64</sup> "You who pass upwards or perhaps come back". See Calvin B. Kendall, *The Allegory of the Church: Romanesque Portals and their Verse Inscriptions*, Toronto, 1998, esp. pt. 3, ch. 4, 51–68.

<sup>65</sup> "The work should brighten the minds so that they may travel through the true lights, to the True Light where Christ is the true door." trans. Erwin Panofsky, *Abbot Sugar on the Abbey Church of St. Denis and its Art Treasures*, 2nd edit., Princeton, 1979, 23.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 23–24, 47–49.

<sup>67</sup> E.g. *Genesis*, 28, 17; *Psalms*, 9, 14–15; 24, 7; 118, 19–21; *Isaiah*, 26, 2; *Ezekiel*, 11; *Matthew*, 16, 18–19 and *John*, 19, 19. Note quotations from the above in medieval writings: e.g. Rabanus Maurus, *De universo*, XIV, ii, Migne *P.L.* CXI, col. 385. Regarding the pagan tradition and its medieval vestiges, see Earl Baldwin Smith, *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages*, Princeton, 1956, 30–37.

<sup>68</sup> An inscription on the twelfth century church of S. Giorgio in Milan illustrates the association of the metaphor with the church portal: "*Junua sum vitae, precor omnes introvenite. per me transibunt. Qui coeli gaudia querunt. Vergine qui natus. nullo de patre creatus. Intrantes salvet. Redeuntes ipse gubernet.*"

spiritual sense was linked to the concepts of time and eternity in twelfth century literature, as in Hugh of Saint-Victor's differentiations between the temporal *sub coelo*, time *ex ipso coelo* and eternity *in ipso coelo*, or in the repeated association of celestial revolutions and temporal concepts on the part of the hexaemeral commentators. Thus we may conclude that the portal of the church symbolized the spiritual transition from a temporal state on earth to an eternal one in heaven.

How was this expressed on the churches of Saintonge-Poitou? The temporal context of the zodiac in the archivolt programs is clarified in the following passage by Hugh of Saint-Victor: "For man should not pride himself for what he has accomplished in his own *lifetime*, before his *time* has come, nor should he who is in trouble be shattered by the adversities inflicted by *time*. For all things pass till the advent of *time* when whatever was done within the duration of *time*, be it bigger or smaller, will be reassessed in eternity . . . The *times* of the just will seem short to them, even if they were long, when they behold the *temporal* merits compensated with eternal rewards" (italics added for emphasis).<sup>69</sup>

Human existence with its trials and tribulations, the process of redemption and the ultimate reward are all described in temporal terms. The zodiac is depicted on the outermost archivolt in accordance with the conception of the eighth stellar sphere as the limit of the temporal universe. Symbols of man's accomplishments (i.e. labors of the months) are intertwined with signs, and his moral struggles (i.e. virtues and vices, wise and foolish virgins) are represented on the inner archivolts (Fig. 33). The exit from the temporal world with the 'advent of time' and the attainment of eternal salvation were not depicted, but by passing through the zodiac-framed portal into the church they were symbolically enacted, for He "will save those who enter".<sup>70</sup>

The tympana of Vézelay, Autun and Chartres focus on a Revelation of Christ at some stage following his sacrifice that would exemplify or anticipate salvation. It has been said that the zodiac and months on the

<sup>69</sup> "Non ergo gloriatur homo pro tempore suo, ante tempus, neque temporum adversis frangatur, qui in tribulatione est, quia transeunt omnia, donec veniat tempus, quando remittetur in aeternitate, quidquid in temporum spatium tractum est, sive majus, sive minus . . . Justis autem tunc tempora sua longa etiam modica videbuntur, cum merita temporalia viderint praemiis aeternis compensari." In *Ecclesiasten Homiliae*, Migne, P.L. CLXXV, col. 209.

<sup>70</sup> *Intrantes salvet* (as in note 68). On portal symbolism as expressed in liturgy, see L.H. Stookey, "The Gothic Cathedral as the Heavenly Jerusalem: Liturgical and Theological Sources," *Gesta*, 1969, 35–41.

framing archivolts locate the depicted event in time or at the end of time.<sup>71</sup> I would suggest rather that the time-image referred not to the time element in the event itself, but served to exemplify salvation in terms of the passage from a temporal to an eternal existence. Thus, it is not sacred time that is depicted but the present time in which the spectator was participating, that which was being experienced and measured and defined. The activities of the months, depicted in all their contemporary realism, reinforce the interpretation. At Vézelay and Autun the months and signs are intertwined to form one continuous cycle. At Chartres the signs are grouped according to the four seasons with complete disregard from their astronomical sequence. My argument is further supported by the juxtaposition of signs on the left portal at Chartres with Liberal Arts on the right. Both lateral archivolts depict man's achievements and *his* time. The temporal aspect of sacred history, or specifically the relation of time to eternity, is represented by the Incarnation and Ascension.<sup>72</sup> Both exemplify the passage from one state to another. In the Incarnation scenes god assumes a finite, temporal state; in the Ascension he reassumes his eternal state. The promise of eternal life to man is figured on the third and central tympanum. The seemingly illogical displacement of two signs from the left to the right portal may be partially explained by the necessity to produce a time motif on the right in order to explicate the symbolic interdependence of the two portals and to emphasize their underlying message.<sup>73</sup>

Three circular medallions interrupt the zodiac cycle at the summit of the archivolt at Vézelay (Fig. 32). The assertion that these figures symbolize eternity is unacceptable on several grounds.<sup>74</sup> During the Middle

<sup>71</sup> Hearn (as in note 62), 201–202 and Panadero (as in note 3), 247–57.

<sup>72</sup> The temporal significance of the Incarnation is discussed by Anton-Hermann Chroust, "The Metaphysics of Time and History in Early Christian Thought," *New Scholasticism*, XIX, 1945, 322–52, esp. 348–52. Directly applicable to the Chartres iconography is the following statement from the Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church (1958, 684–85): "In a wider sense the Incarnation is a special exemplification of the general problem of the relation of Time and Eternity, of Finitude and Infinity."

<sup>73</sup> F. Terpak (*Elements of Creation Iconography in the Incarnation Portal of the West Façade of Chartres Cathedral*, Master's Thesis, Penn. State University, 1972, n. 109) saw the displacement of signs as an extension of the theme of creation. This is irreconcilable with the identification of the Ascension on the left tympanum. John James, in "An examination of some anomalies in the Ascension and Incarnation Portals of Chartres Cathedral," *Gesta*, XXV, 1986, 1, 101–108, esp. 104, n. 10, suggested the transfer of signs was meant to symbolize Christ as both god and man.

<sup>74</sup> This theory was set forth in G. de Campeaux & S. Sterckx, *Introduction au Monde des Symboles*, La-Pierre-Qui-Vire, 1966, 400–26, esp. 425.



Ages the circular animal motif frequently used to symbolize eternity was the *ouroboros*.<sup>75</sup> The use of blatant, secular motifs for this purpose would be blasphemous. The corresponding depiction of *Annus* at nearby Autun shows the Year in its most mundane form (Fig. 37), and both this and the three Vézelay medallions are identifiable as cyclic images.

At Vézelay the point of interruption of the time-cycle marks the summer solstice that symmetrically divides the signs according to their diurnal and nocturnal houses. There are antique and medieval precedents for this division and authors traditionally explained the summer solstice in the sign of Cancer as the point at which the sun “ends his course, which is marked by the longest day, thence to begin a return course towards the shortening days”.<sup>76</sup> This turning point and descent is illustrated by placing Cancer on the highest point of the zodiacal arc, followed by Leo, where the descent begins. The cyclic motifs in between conform to the assignation of the solstice as the point of renewal.<sup>77</sup> If not for the misplacement of the reliefs, the layout at Autun would be almost identical to that of Vézelay, with *Annus* personifying the cyclic renewal of time between Cancer and Leo.<sup>78</sup> Thus the cyclic motifs at Vézelay and Autun relate to the time-cycle and to the program as a whole as symbols of renewal.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Among the textual sources for the iconography of the *ouroboros* in the Middle Ages, see Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, I, 20, 1 & 2; Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*, I, 70, and Rabanus Maurus, *De universo* (or *De rerum naturis*) III. See also Francis McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries*, Chapel Hill (NC), 1962, 81, 170, pl. 1a & b, VIII, 4.

<sup>76</sup> Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, I, 17 (trans. P.V. Davies, New York, 1969); gloss on Bede's *De rerum naturis* (as in note 50), 233–34; Rabanus Maurus, *De computo*, XXXVIII (as in note 25); Honorius, *De imagine mundi*, II, LXXXIV (as in note 50) and the *Chronicon Zwifaltense* (as in note 53), fol. 51v (in W. Hübner, *Zodiacus Christianus*, Königstein, 1983, 201).

<sup>77</sup> The assignation of Cancer and Capricorn as portals of the sun or as gates of heaven was transmitted by Macrobius (*Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, I, 12, 1–4; *Saturnalia*, I, 17, 63) and others to medieval writers; e.g. Bernard Sylvester, *Cosmographia*, ed P. Dronke, Leiden, 1978, 40–41. On the Christian depiction of this theme in the twelfth century, see Christian Heck, “Iconographie médiévale et héritage antique, la représentation des ‘Portes du Soleil’ dans la calendrier du Psautier de Lunel,” *Scriptorium*, XXXV, 1981, 2, 241–61. De Champeaux & Sterckx (as in note 74) interpreted the point of the summer solstice at Vézelay as the suspension of time, a theory for which I find no support in the antique and medieval sources mentioned above.

<sup>78</sup> The carving at Autun was executed prior to the placement of the stones. Due to careless placement, the signs are asymmetrically divided so that five are on the left and seven on the right. Cancer was dislocated from its intended position to the left of *Annus* and Leo was moved too far to the right.

<sup>79</sup> The keystone above the Ascension at Chartres bears an image that some have identified as the hand of God, others as the dove of the Holy Spirit. Although the rough state of the carving does not permit a definite identification, it appears to me to be the head of a serpent. If this is correct, the iconography is based on the metaphoric image of the Ascen-

The specific iconographic context of the Romanesque zodiac is different in each case, and its meaning may be interpreted on several levels in much the same way that contemporary theologians speculated on the different meanings of time. However, it is precisely the undefined level, that which has no literary correspondent, which constitutes the most relevant evidence of basic mental changes. In other words, the fact that an image of time could contemporaneously be depicted in so many iconographic contexts, for which there were no explicit models, is an indication of its significance. The zodiac-cycle was not associated with depictions of the Ascension, the Pentecost or the Last Judgment before the twelfth century. Nor was it shown with virtues and vices or with wise and foolish virgins at that time. On the Romanesque facade it suddenly appeared in all of these contexts and assumed meaning in each.

The zodiacal time-cycle that functioned as an autonomous element on the church façade did not derive from the zodiac of the heavens or the universe depicted in religious manuscripts or on liturgical objects. The church adopted a new image to depict a theme that was unprecedented in ecclesiastical art, an image whose temporal meaning had been established in writings dedicated to natural phenomena, but which had not been associated with Christological depictions. The portal zodiac represented the time allotted to man and the time to which he was subjected in the divine plan for salvation. By emphasizing the role of temporal existence in relation to the ultimate transcendence of time, the zodiac image reflected the new awareness of the time dimension, in general, and a changing perception of man's temporality, in particular.

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sion in *John*, 3, 13–17, which bears the message of salvation through eternal life. The serpent would correspond to the cyclic motifs at Vézelay and Autun as a symbol of renewal, in general, and of the renewal in time, in particular. It is similarly located within the time-cycle, on one hand, and above the god-figure, on the other.



PART TWO

CHANGING CONCEPTS OF TIME IN THE RENAISSANCE





## INTRODUCTION

### CHANGING CONCEPTS OF TIME IN THE RENAISSANCE

Despite the difficulty in establishing a comprehensive analytical definition thereof, the term Renaissance has assumed specific evaluative connotations, implying that certain modifications of concepts and attitudes distinguish this culture from that which preceded it. The question of whether there was a change in the conception of time during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is fundamental to our use of the term Renaissance, with its explicit assumptions regarding new historical consciousness and changes in mentality.

It has been demonstrated that a new sense of time already found expression in proto-Renaissance literature, primarily in that of Dante and Petrarch.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have stressed a new consciousness and a practical attitude rooted in the conception that time was precious and must be exploited and controlled by every available means. Richard Quinones went as far as to say "If the Renaissance invented space, it also invented time, and the sense of time it acquired did not lead to quietism, but was part of a dynamic relationship between human energies in contest with a hostile external reality".<sup>2</sup> But if Renaissance time was an invention, I suggest that it was no more so than that of the Middle Ages. Natural philosophers of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, under the influence of Aristotelian doctrines and the revival of Neoplatonism, continued to debate traditional questions, such as those regarding the creation of time, time and eternity, or time and motion.<sup>3</sup> But what was influential in the early and mid Renaissance, on the everyday level of social and political realities, was not the modification of an abstract philosophical or theological

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<sup>1</sup> See Richard J. Quinones, *The Renaissance Discovery of Time*, Cambridge, Mass., 1972, 3–171; Gervase Rosser, "Turning Tale into Vision: Time and the Image in the 'Divina Commedia'," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 46, autumn 2005, 106–22.

<sup>2</sup> R.J. Quinones, "The New Dynamic of Time in Renaissance Literature and Society," in R. Doggett (ed.), *Time: The Greatest Innovator*, Wash. DC, 1986, 25–95.

<sup>3</sup> See Maia Wellington Gahtan, "A Renaissance Treatise on Time Lilio Gregorio Giraldi's *De Annis et mensibus*," in J.L. Charlet, L.G. Rosa, H. Hofmann, B. Hosington, E. Rodrigues Peregrina & R. Truman (eds.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Cantabrigiensis, Proceedings of the Eleventh International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies*, Cambridge, 2000; J.J.A. Mooij, *Time and Mind, The History of a Philosophical Problem*, Leiden, 2005, 121–29.

temporal doctrine but rather the internalization of responses, and perceived implications for the individual in a dynamic society. By the mid fifteenth century there were critical thinkers in Italy, who were denying time as an existential reality outside the human mind.<sup>4</sup> Secularization of temporal conceptions and attitudes,<sup>5</sup> admonishments against *acedia* and the waste of time, debates regarding humanistic ideals of education related to the utilization of time,<sup>6</sup> pragmatic strategies to counteract the effects of transience and caducity, emphasis on the present, all of these have been set forth as characteristic of the Renaissance confrontation with time.

The development of temporal conceptions and attitudes from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries was not uniform, consistent or progressive. There was a great difference between attitudes towards time promoted by early humanism in the fifteenth century, and those that emerged in the context of sixteenth century social, political and religious debates and conflicts. Reactions to the dynamic cultural and religious upheavals in the second half of that century brought the issue of time increasingly to the fore, as illustrated by its frequent adaptations in literature and the visual arts. Changing concepts of time in the literature of the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, from Dante to Shakespeare, has been the subject of numerous studies. Although there have been a limited number of interesting studies that concentrate on particular aspects of temporal iconography in sixteenth century art, hardly any research has been directed towards the expression of time concepts in the visual arts prior to that. The following chapters will undertake to fill this gap, demonstrating the chronological developments of the theme.

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<sup>4</sup> E.g. the Florentines Giambattista Gelli (1498–1563) and Anton Francesco Doni (1513–74); See Maia Wellington Gahtan, "Notions of Past and Future in Italian Renaissance Letters," in Christian Heck & K. Lippincott (eds.), *Symbols of Time in the History of Art*, Turnhout, 69–83, esp. 77 & 82, note 32, and Mooij (as in note 3), esp. 119–20.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Hans Baron, "Secularization of Wisdom and Political Humanism in the Renaissance," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXI, 1960, 143–45.

<sup>6</sup> See Paul F. Grendler, "The Rejection of Learning in Mid-Cinquecento Italy," *Studies in the Renaissance*, vol. 13, 1966, 230–49; Quiniones, 1986 (as in note 2), 28–30.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE RENAISSANCE PERSONIFICATION OF TIME IN ILLUSTRATIONS TO PETRARCH'S *TRIONFO DEL TEMPO*

A new visual allegory that focused on the personification of Time was created in the *Quattrocento* by illustrators of Francesco Petrarca's *Trionfo del Tempo*, fifth in the series of six allegorical *Trionfi* (1340–1374). My foregoing chapters have repeatedly illustrated that precursors of Renaissance temporal iconography are discernable in late medieval art, but it must be emphasized that Time itself was not visually personified before these *Quattrocento* illustrations. The present chapter will chart the artistic development of an unprecedented artistic theme, identifying aspects of iconographic continuity and innovation and analyzing the implications of its mutations.

The extant *Trionfo del Tempo* illustrations, produced between 1440 and 1600 in manuscripts and printed editions of the *Trionfi*, have never before been subject to systematic research.<sup>7</sup> My study has been based upon over a hundred illustrations that are adduced as valid evidence of the development and formation of time-concepts. Literary sources have provided further evidence of background and contexts to support iconographic interpretation.

#### *Questioning Assumptions: The Problem of "Father Time"*

What do the illustrations of Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo* actually illustrate? If this question appears paradoxical, it is because we assume they illustrate the text and, if we have read "Father Time", Erwin Panofsky's scholarly exposition on the subject, we assume they portray "the mighty relentless destroyer imagined by Petrarch".<sup>8</sup> How did the illustrator's

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<sup>7</sup> This chapter is based on my unpublished PhD thesis: *The Image of Time in Renaissance Depictions of Petrarch's 'Trionfo del Tempo'*, Tel-Aviv University, 1982. A concise article on my research was published as: "The Early Renaissance Personification of Time and Changing Concepts of Temporality," *Renaissance Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2000, 301–28. See Appendices I & II.

<sup>8</sup> Erwin Panofsky, "Father Time," in *Studies in Iconology*, New York, Evanston & London, 1972, 69–93, esp. 79.

depict this destroyer? Again the answer seems to be evident. Since 1939 scholars have quoted Panofsky, who established *Kronos-Saturn* as the prototype for the personification of Time depicted by Petrarch's illustrators.<sup>9</sup> For over seventy years no one has questioned or debated his basic thesis.

Panofsky had approached the problem of Father Time with a pre-established theoretical framework, the validity of which rested upon certain broad assumptions regarding Renaissance art. Panofsky assumed that the "Renaissance movement in art" meant either "the reintegration of classical motifs and classical themes" or a "visual and emotional synthesis between the pagan past and the Christian present", most often achieved by "the reinterpretation of classical images".<sup>10</sup> In any case, the motif or the theme, or both, were presumably classical in an image which was by definition "Renaissance art". The element of classical and pagan revival was a *sine qua non*. In the present example it was logically assumed that Father Time was basically a classical image and represented "a synthesis between the pagan past and the Christian present."<sup>11</sup> In other words, this was a classical image that had lost its classical appearance during the middle ages, had become invested with new meaning during that period and had retained this meaning even after being "restored to its original appearance by the Renaissance".<sup>12</sup> Panofsky illustrated this thesis in the case of Father Time by what appeared to be a water-tight structure of artistic and literary evidence. It is my conviction that this deductive approach provided the justification for a selective and insufficient examination of the source material. It will be shown that most of the Renaissance visual sources were not mentioned by Professor Panofsky and, in all likelihood, were unknown to him. Furthermore, the few Renaissance images of Time selected as evidence were late examples and represented a limited stage in the development of this theme.

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<sup>9</sup> Among the many authors who have followed in the footsteps of Panofsky's "Father Time", see Jonathan D. Cohen, "Subjective Time," in Julius T. Fraser (ed.), *The Voices of Time*, New York, 1966, 274–75; Richard J. Quinones, "Time and Historical Values in the Literature of the Renaissance," in C.A. Patrides (ed.), *Aspects of Time*, Manchester, 1976, 40 and "The New Dynamic of Time in Renaissance Literature and Society," in Rachel Doggett, Susan Jaskot & Robert Rand (eds.), *Time the Greatest Innovator*, Wash. DC, 1986, 25–95, esp. 26; Samuel L. Macey, "The Changing Iconography of Father Time," in Julius T. Fraser, Nathaniel M. Lawrence and Don Park (eds.), *The Study of Time III*, New York, Heidelberg, Berlin, 1972, 540–77; Kristen Lippincott & Umberto Eco, *The story of Time*, London, 1999, 171.

<sup>10</sup> Panofsky (as in note 2), 69.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

In order to re-examine the above questions from scratch, we must first establish the relationship between the text and the illustrations. The debt of the illustrators to Petrarch's text will be examined by clarifying whether Petrarch's concepts of time were conveyed by the illustrators and whether the imagery described in his *Trionfo del Tempo* was visually portrayed. Study of the extant illustrations and identification of their textual and visual sources will support interpretation at definable stages of iconographic development. Based on the analysis of these patterns of development distinctions will be made between continuity and innovation.

### *Petrarch's Description of Time*

Petrarch wrote the *Trionfo del Tempo* as the fifth out of his six *Trionfi* and not as an independent work.<sup>13</sup> It follows the *Trionfo della Fama*, which was a central theme in Petrarch's earlier writings, in his philosophy and even in his biography. The significance of fame for Petrarch was related to his sense of history and his personal desire to attain lasting glory by identifying with and emulating the classical examples of human achievement. When he became disillusioned and rejected these values in later years, time that had always loomed threateningly before him (as his writing attests) became the dominant force in the face of which all human achievement proved useless. As he became more disturbed by the passing of time, Petrarch's writings dealt increasingly with its destructive power and his personal sense of being swept by its flow towards death.<sup>14</sup> About four years before his death Petrarch wrote the last two *Trionfi*. The *Trionfo del Tempo* leads to the *Trionfo dell'Eternità*, and the two form a unit that is separated both by years and by content from the previous chapters.<sup>15</sup>

The description of time is poetic and assumes a narrative form. Some of the psychological experiences, which were expressed before in sonnets and letters, are translated here into mythic form. Many of the metaphors and symbols are familiar from those works, but the *Trionfi* descriptions

<sup>13</sup> *Trionfo dell'Amore, Trionfo della Castità, Trionfo della Morte, Trionfo della Fama, Trionfo del Tempo, Trionfo dell'Eternità*.

<sup>14</sup> V. Rossi et al. (eds.), *Familiarum rerum libri*, 4 vols., Florence, 1933–42, XVI, II, & XXIV, I, 24–26. For a most interesting and penetrating analysis of Petrarch's writings on time, with references to Roman and medieval Christian Sources and influences, see Richard R. Quinones, *The Renaissance Discovery of Time*, Cambridge, Mass. 1972, 106–171.

<sup>15</sup> See Ernest H. Wilkins, "The Chronology of the Triumphs," in his *Studies in the Life and Works of Petrarch*, Cambridge, Mass., 1955 and *Life of Petrarch*, Chicago and London, 1963.



are more graphic; that is to say, their concrete descriptions and visual similes are easily translated from literary into visual modes of expression. Petrarch opens with the vision of radiant *Sol* emerging on a *quadriga* from his golden dwelling. He drives four horses with spur and whip. Wings increase his speed so that he is swifter than a falcon after its prey. His course is round; it is the infinite cycle of Day and Night. Gazing at *Sol*, the author speaks about the vanity of setting one's heart on the things that time takes away. He says: "How swiftly time before my eyes rushed on after the guiding sun that never rests".<sup>16</sup> Life is brief, "This morning I was a child and now I am old".<sup>17</sup> It is no more than a single day, "cloudy and cold and short and filled with grief".<sup>18</sup> He admonishes men against false hopes and describes them as a group of blind fools who move quietly onward without fearing time. Time dissolves all mortal things, both physical and mental. Man turns to dust and to smoke. Old age brings misery and Glory melts like snow in the sun. Time, in his avarice, steals all and thus triumphs over the world and fame.

The radiant sun on his four horse chariot, the cold clouds and snow in winter, dust and smoke, a crowd of blind fools moving forward, the rotations of day and night, a falcon's flight, ruins of the world, disintegrating pomp and grandeur, and the miseries of old age are some of the suggestive images in Petrarch's text. Graphic descriptions of time continue in the final *Trionfo*, where God triumphs over Time. Time walks and flies but never stands still. Eternity, by contrast, appears as the three parts of time combined, immobile and unchangeable. The end of time is described as the immobility of heavenly bodies, the quieting of the elements, and the unification of all time's parts into one. Time, the destroyer, would die together with Death, the greedy one. In the final part of the last *Trionfo* Time and Death are repeatedly described as conspirators against man, his achievements and his fame. All hope and beauty awaited man above the temporal world, in heaven.

Petrarch's vivid descriptions were potential material for illustrators. Visual prototypes were available for images such as *Sol* on his *quadriga*, the planets, the world, and periods of time, such as months and seasons. All of these motifs had appeared in one form or another in the macrocos-

<sup>16</sup> "Io vidi il tempo andar leggero dopo la guida sua che mai non posa", *Trionfo del Tempo*, lines 46–47, trans. Ernest H. Wilkins, *The Triumphs of Petrarch*, Chicago, 1962, 95.

<sup>17</sup> "stamani ero un fanciullo ed ora sono vecchio", *Trionfo Del Tempo*, line 60; trans. Wilkins, 1962.

<sup>18</sup> "nubile e breve e pieno di noia", *Trionfo del Tempo*, line 62; trans. Wilkins, 1962.

mic diagrams of the Middle Ages. The only motif for which illustrators had no clear cut image was the personification of Time. Petrarch had assigned him many abstract characteristics but no real physiognomy. He had suggested a personification by stating that time walked or flew. He was also said to be extremely quick and, most of all, he was said to be a thief and a destroyer. No conclusions can be drawn regarding his age, dress or attributes. Nevertheless, if he could fly, he must have had wings.

*Illustrations of the Trionfo del Tempo—the initial stage*

With Petrarch's text in mind, let us examine the earliest extant illustrations of the *Trionfo del Tempo*. Five manuscript illuminations, two complete *cassoni* (in London and Boston) and *cassoni* fragments (in Florence and Bologna), with no indication of prior examples, demonstrate the earliest visual interpretation of this theme (Figs. 38–43).<sup>19</sup> All of these were executed in Florence between 1440 and 1450 and form a more or less homogeneous group. With the exception of the Boston *cassone* painted by Francesco Pesellino (Fig. 43), which deviates somewhat and will be discussed separately, these illustrations follow the same iconographic scheme. Time, personified as an aged and bearded man with wings, leaning on one or two crutches, is standing on a chariot led by two stags. He is usually bald and decrepit and wears a simple short garment, which is often tattered. In all cases but one, the chariot is presented in profile or three-quarter view that suggests movement from left to right. On the *cassone* panel in Bologna the chariot is almost frontal. The background, suggestive of rocks, or rocky hills and grass-covered terrain, is limited to essentials in the manuscripts and forms a continuous panorama uniting the individual *Trionfi* scenes on the *cassoni*. Some imagination was invested in depicting the chariots, of which no two are identical. The only significant variations discernable at this stage are found in those symbolic attributes which supplement the basic theme. In two illuminations (*Pal.* 72 & *Urb.* 683) Time carries the tripartite globe, known as the *rota terrarum* or *orbis terrae*, with the sections labeled [E]uropa, Africa and Asia (Figs. 38 & 41), which we have noted in cosmological *rota* illustrations to Isidore of Seville's *De natura rerum*

<sup>19</sup> These manuscripts illuminations are as follows: Florence, *Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana*, *Pal.* 72, fol. 86, dated 1442 and *Strozzi* 174, fol. 44r Florence, *Biblioteca Riccardiana*, *Ricc.* 1129, fol. 42v; and Rome, *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, *Urb.* 683, fol. 33r. See Appendix I.

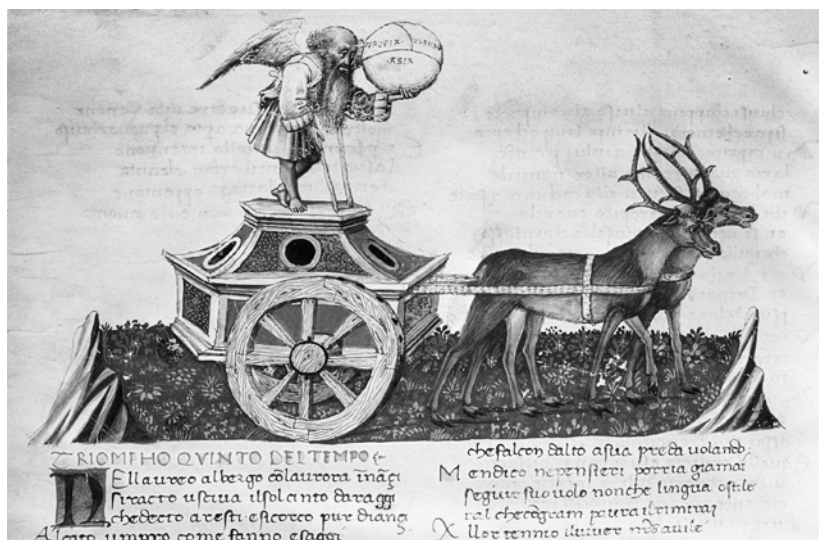


Fig. 38. [COL. PL. 5] *Triumph of Time*, Florentine illumination, MS. Pal. 72, fol. 86v, 1442, Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana. © su concessione del Ministero per I Beni e le Attività Culturali.



Fig. 39. *Triumph of Time*, Florentine illumination, MS. 1129, fol. 42v, ca. 1440-1450, Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana.



Fig. 40. [COL. PL. 6] *Triumph of Time*, Florentine illumination, MS. Strozzi 174, fol. 44r., ca. 1440–1450, Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana. © su concessione del Ministero per I Beni e le Attività Culturali.





Fig. 41. *Triumph of Time*, Florentine illumination, ca. 1440–1450, Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. *Urb. lat.* 683, fol. 33r.





Fig. 42. *Triumphs of Fame, Time and Eternity*, Florentine cassone panel, attributed to Domenico di Michelino, mid 15th c., London, ex. Walter Burns, Hatfield (1922); Leonard Mondadori Collection, Milan (2000); O'Reilly's Gallery, New York (2004), Sold Sotheby's 2006, Private Collection.



Fig. 43. Francesco Pesellino, *Triumphs of Fame, Time and Eternity*, cassone panel, ca. 1450, Boston, Gardner Museum

(Fig. 12) and subsequent medieval sources.<sup>20</sup> In two other illuminations (*Strozzi* 174 & *Ricc.* 1174) the globe has been replaced by a geocentric armillary sphere, with its handle located on the polar axis, showing the ecliptic, planetary courses and meridian circles that were familiar from the medieval astrological diagrams previously discussed (Fig. 40). Three illustrations belonging to this formative period introduce the four elements, a theme similarly derived from medieval cosmological diagrams. Each element identifiable by its color is contained in some sort of receptacle and is displayed by a nude *putto*, sitting or standing on the corners of the chariot.<sup>21</sup> These Florentine illustrations, created before 1450, provided

<sup>20</sup> See Wesley M. Stevens, "The Figure of the Earth in Isidore's 'Natura Rerum'," in his *Cycles of Time and Scientific Learning in Medieval Europe*, Aldershot & Brookfields, 1995, 268–77.

<sup>21</sup> Identification of elements by colors appeared in the Middle Ages; e.g. Rupert of Deutz, *De trinitate*, Migne, P.L. 167, 720–21, regarding colors of the Hebrew priest as reference to the four elements. Leon Battista Alberti in *De pictura* (1435) mentions the colors

the dominant prototype for the subsequent iconography of the *Trionfo del Tempo* until about 1480 and, in some cases, long after.

The hourglass as a symbol of time made its first appearance in the *Trionfo del Tempo* by 1450, as seen in the Florentine *cassone* from this period where it is carried on the back of Father Time (Fig. 42). This *cassone* is closely linked to those dating between 1440 and 1450, especially to the Pesellino panels in Boston (Fig. 43). Among the changes introduced by Pesellino, that involving the figure of Time is most prominent. Although he still retains the crutch and wings, this bearded figure resembles a classical toga-clad philosopher semi-reclining on a classical throne. The type would reappear only in the sixteenth century when it was painted by Titian or Bonifazio Veneziano, as known from an eighteenth century engraving by Silvester Pomarède (Fig. 44).

The only non-Florentine examples belonging to this early stage are two mutually unrelated illuminations from northern Italy (Vatican MSS. *Barb. lat.* 3943 & *Vat. lat.* 3157), where only the image of Apollo appears, inspired by Petrarch's text (Fig. 45 & 46). The depiction of Apollo as an alternative to the personification of Time would have no following in subsequent *Trionfi* illustrations of the fifteenth century.

On the basis of the extant manuscript illuminations and *cassone* paintings executed in Florence between 1440 and 1450 the following conclusions have been reached. The illustrators were not influenced by Petrarch's description of Time as a powerful destroyer nor did they adopt his literary images that could have easily been adapted to visual depictions. The main subject of the illustrations, the personification of Time, had not been described by the poet and the decrepit old man bent over his crutches had nothing in common with Petrarch's concept of time as expressed in the *Trionfo del Tempo*. Petrarch differentiated between cause and effect, that is to say Time as a force as opposed to the destruction it caused. The illustrators combined cause and effect in one and the same personification, and apparently had no knowledge of classical personifications associated with time. Those themes that are related to the text, such as the world globe and celestial sphere, had visual prototypes in medieval cosmic illustrations.

The foregoing conclusions contradict Erwin Panofsky's assumptions that *Trionfo del Tempo* illustrators portray "the mighty relentless destroyer

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of the elements as the painter's basic colors—red, blue, green and gray. See Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. J.R. Spencer, New Haven & London, 1966, Bk. I, 19–50.



Fig. 44. Silvester Pomarède, *Triumph of Time*, engraving, 1748, supposedly after a painting by Titian, Venice, Museo Civico Correr. Archivio Fotografico, Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia.

imagined by Petrarch”, that “Father Time is mostly nude” and his most frequent attribute is a scythe or sickle, and that his image is based on classical personifications of Time, primarily that of Kronos-Saturn.<sup>22</sup> Panofsky claimed that the illustrators took from Saturn “the grim decrepit appearance, the crutches and finally, such strict Saturnine features as the scythe and devouring motif”. In fact, none of these assumptions are correct. Panofsky was unaware that a whole series of *Trionfi* illustrations executed in the *Quattrocento* bore no relationship to the nude Saturn devouring a child or holding a scythe. In fact, there is no evidence that Time’s decrepit appearance and crutches were derived from the image of Saturn. Models for feeble and tattered elders were ubiquitous in fourteenth century painting, especially after 1348, as prospective victims in the Triumph of Death, cripples in hagiographic narratives, and personifications of senescence in the Ages of Man.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Panofsky (as in note 2), 71, 79 & 93 for above reference.

<sup>23</sup> See Elizabeth Sears, *The Ages of Man, Medieval Interpretations of the Life Cycle*, Princeton, 1986. The conflation of Saturn with the seventh age of man, as seen for example in Guariento’s Eremitani frescoes, derived from antique astrological theory that does not



Fig. 45. *Triumph of Time*, Lombard illumination, third quarter of the 15th c., Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Barb. lat. 3943, fol. 191r.





Fig. 46. *Triumph of Time*, North Italian illumination, 15th c., Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. lat. 3157, fol. 34r.



Petrarch's descriptions were not the basis for visual imagery adopted by early Florentine illustrators. Before questioning the connotations of this disjunction between text and image, it is important to establish the sources of these fifteenth century illustrations. With the exception of the chariot, described in Petrarch's *Trionfo dell'Amore* and applied by illustrators to all six *Trionfi*, the iconographic components of the initial *Trionfo del Tempo* scheme were derived from medieval cosmic diagrams. Three consistent motifs in the early illustrations, the personification of Time, the world globe or celestial sphere and the four elements, constitute an interrelated complex. The analogies between the allegorical picture and the schematic diagram are evident if we regard the illustrations as a naturalistic, three-dimensional transformation of the schematic diagram as represented, for example, in a late fifteenth century illustration to Isidore of Seville's *De responsione mundi et astrorum ordinatione* (Fig. 19), itself based on medieval precedents (Fig. 20). In the center of the *Trionfo* illustration is *Tempus*, identified with *Homo* (the microcosm) and the moving spirit of *Mundus* (the macrocosm). On the outer part of the diagrams and the illustrations we find the four elements that represent not only the material world but also the physical aspect of temporal flux. Parallels between the two illustrations are evident.

All elements of the macrocosm had correspondences in the microcosm; these were illustrated from the eleventh century in order to demonstrate the effects of the former on the latter. Whether the central figure was *Annus*, *Christus-Annus*, or the *Macrocosmos-Microcosmos* analogy (as in Fig. 20), correspondences established between categories of time (days, seasons, months, ages), space (cardinal points, signs of the zodiac and planets as celestial and temporal images), and matter (elements & humors) were conceived as evidence of the divine. *Annus* or *Christus-Annus* in the center represented cosmic time, the Macrocosm was depicted as space and matter functioning under its dominion, and man reflected in his body and soul a parallel synthesis of the three categories.<sup>24</sup>

According to medieval speculation, the passage of time was manifested in the metamorphosis of nature that was caused by the constant interaction of the elements.<sup>25</sup> The twelfth century illustration of the *Clavis*

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appear to have reached the West before the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and found expression in fourteenth century art: Sears, 50–53.

<sup>24</sup> See Leonard Barkan, *Nature's Woks of Art, The Human Body as Image of the World*, New Haven & London, 1975, esp. 46–50.

<sup>25</sup> See Aristotle, *Physics*, VIII, 4 and Isidore of Seville's *Etymologium sive originum*, XIII, 3.

*physicae* by Honorius Augustodunensis (Fig. 21) schematically depicts the stages of Creation in the system of the universe set forth by John Scotus Erigena (ca. 810–877) in his ninth century *Divisione naturae*.<sup>26</sup> The illustration defines *Tempus* and *Locus* as the two initial categories necessary for an organized world. The *primordiales cause*, personified attributes of god are represented on the upper register. These invest their creative power into the *materia informis*, demonstrating the *effectus causarum* as it is subjected to *Tempus* and *Locus* (second register), and through their interaction the forms of the four elements are generated (third register). The elements are intermediaries between the primordial causes and the whole creation, and are labeled *natura creata, non creans*. Below, the image of God pulling the strings of Creation is the labeled *finis*. The system of emanations thus ends with God reuniting the tripartite and quadripartite categorical subdivisions into an eternal *finis*. The miniature is especially instructive in clarifying the relationship between medieval sources and *Quattrocento* imagery. It shows how time, space and matter were conceived as categories in a hierarchy of emanations that begins and ends with God.

It is conceivable that this illustration, or one like it, was circulating in Italian circles, for during the period of the initial *Trionfi* illustrations the *Clavis physicae* was being copied for Cardinal Nicolas of Cusa (1401–64) in Rome. In any case, schemes of this type, together with the underlying concepts they conveyed, constituted prototypes for the *Quattrocento* illustrations of the *Trionfo del Tempo*. It should therefore be emphasized that, contrary to these precedents, the *Trionfo* illustrations establish a clear differentiation between the personification of God and that of Time. Although the inspiration for this autonomous image of Time emanated from Petrarch's text, it is significant that Renaissance artists converted the bodiless spirit described by the poet into a vivid personification.

The earlier illustrators created and combined two attributes that would remain constant features. Wings, symbols of volatility and velocity, were suggested by similes in the text;<sup>27</sup> the traditional crutch or walking stick emphasized labored progress (Fig. 47). The inherent contradiction between wings and crutch was not meant to express ambiguity. It was

<sup>26</sup> For the philosophical interpretations of this important miniature, see Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, "Le cosmos symbolique du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, vol. 28, 1953, 31–81; Francis Yates, *Lull & Bruno, Collected Essays*, London, Boston, Henley, 1982, 91–94, and John Murdoch, *Album of Science*, New York, 1984, 332.

<sup>27</sup> *Trionfo del Tempo*, lines 23, 33 and 76; *Trionfo dell'Eternità*, line 8.



Fig. 47. *Triumph of Time*, Florentine illumination, 1456, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. Ital. 545, fol. 48.

the means for symbolically describing cause and effect as interrelated concepts. Not only had God been replaced by Time at the center of the allegory, but cause (Time) and effect (temporality and its manifestations) were combined in one figure. The godhead of the medieval hierarchy was displaced in this scheme of time. He had been relegated by Petrarch and his illustrators to the last chapter, the *Trionfo dell'Eternità*.

Another noteworthy aspect concerns the linear progression of time, which was represented spatially by the left to right progression of the chariot. Whereas the *Trionfo dell'Eternità* was always depicted frontally, a position indicating immobility, Time was shown in profile to indicate motion. The total lack of cyclic or restorative symbolism, which was so ingrained in the antique iconography of time, is further evidence that the illustrators were unaware of classical models. One exception is the image of the nude *putti* bearing elements, heirs of seasonal *putti* or agricultural figures of *karpoi* bearing fruits of the earth, such as were familiar from late antique allegories on temples, sarcophagi and mosaics, where figures of abundance and fertility were combined with temporal personifications (Fig. 3).<sup>28</sup> Personified medieval seasons, like ancient *karpoi*, sometimes bore their offerings in receptacles, but the fashion for nude *putti* in Tuscan art of the mid *Quattrocento* may have provided the main incentive for the adaptation of this classical motif to its new context.

The globe and armillary sphere held by Time were alternative symbols of his cosmic control. As an archaic symbol of the *cosmocrator*, the globe had been assigned to Apollo and then to Christ. The geocentric armillary sphere, on the other hand, had been used primarily as an attribute of astronomy and learning in general, rather than as a symbol of the cosmos, in medieval miniatures of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Petrarch's illustrators adopted it to reiterate the traditional association of planetary movements and time-computation, once more emphasizing that time is defined by means of motion.<sup>29</sup>

We can summarize the initial stage in illustrations to Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo* as a climax of a process that had begun several centuries earlier, with the new learning in the monastic and cathedral schools of

<sup>28</sup> See also the seasons as *putti* on the arch of Septimius Severus, Rome.

<sup>29</sup> C.f. Aristotle, *Physics*, IV, xiv, 223a and xi, 219a, and Plato, *Timaeus*, 37D–8B. Boccaccio in the *Genealogia degli dei*, wrote that the numbers of the stars are divided so that we can distinguish time by sidereal motions. Between 1348–64 Giovanni de' Dondi created his giant astronomical clock, which recorded the movements of the planets on seven separate dials and represented the solar and lunar cycles.

the twelfth century when time was gradually transformed from a dimension of the theocentric cosmic structure into the image of an all-pervading cosmic power. This process may be compared with what Leonard Barkan defined as “the fulfillment of intellectual possibilities that were born in the millennium between Augustine and the *Ovid moralisé* and the bringing to life, . . . aesthetic life, of medieval intellectual theories”.<sup>30</sup> Although these statements were applied to the Renaissance revival of pagan culture, they are also valid for facets of Renaissance iconography and are particularly apt in describing the evolutionary process of the conception and visual representation of time, which assumed momentum in the twelfth century and reached its artistic fulfillment in the Italian *Quattrocento*. The fact that this evolution did reach its fulfillment at that time provides a criterion for distinguishing between categories of medieval and Renaissance that takes into consideration the dynamic and often reticent process of gestation, not only the ultimate birth (or rebirth).

*Time and Temporality: Stage II, 1450–60*

Approximately one-fifth of the extant *Trionfi* manuscripts belong to the decade between 1450 and 1460. With the exception of three from northern Italy, all the illuminations are Florentine.<sup>31</sup> The scene of the *Trionfo del Tempo* decorates only one known *cassone* from this period. The fact that the Triumph of Time was not always included in the illustrated *Trionfi* series on *cassoni*, as attested by several fragments assigned to this decade, may be explained by their function as marriage chests.<sup>32</sup>

The most significant modification in the iconography of the *Trionfo Del Tempo*, around the mid century, involves the replacement of cosmic images (globe, armillary sphere, elements) with symbols that expressed the nature and effects of time in relation to human existence. An impor-

<sup>30</sup> Leonard Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh*, New Haven & London, 1986, 171–72.

<sup>31</sup> MSS. Ital. 545, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; Ash. 845 & Pal. 192, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence; Pal. 280, Biblioteca Palatina, Parma; Cod. 1081, Biblioteca Corsiniana, Rome and Chigi L. iv, 114, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome are Florentine. MS. Vind. 2649, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna as well as Pal. 2663 and Pal. 307, Biblioteca Palatina, Parma, are north Italian. See Appendix I.

<sup>32</sup> E.g. the Florentine *cassone*, Victoria And Albert Museum and *cassone* 149, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena. Cf. four semi-circular parts of a wooden furnishing, ca. 1460, Palazzo Davanzati, Florence with paintings of four *Trionfi*—*Amore*, *Fama*, *Morte* and *Eternità*. These were attributed to Giovanni di Ser Giovanni Guido, known as *Lo Scheggia*, by Luciano Bellosi & Margaret Haines, *Lo Scheggia*, Florence-Siena, 1991, 81.



tant attribute of time, the hourglass, seems to have made its first appearance there around 1440 and was then introduced in a whole series of illuminations and on Florentine *cassoni* (Figs. 42, 48, 50). We have seen that images of the initial stage were carried over from medieval cosmic imagery, but the hourglass had no cosmic connotations and was comparatively new to art; the earliest known depiction, used as an attribute of Temperance in the *Palazzo Pubblico* in Siena preceded its appearance in the *Trionfo del Tempo* by about 100 years. Although the fresco was painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti (d. 1348), the hourglass was executed during repairs in the 1350s. Temperance signified moderation, regularity and restraint. In the broader sense the personification represented moral self-discipline or the self imposition of limits. The hourglass of Temperance showed that proper measurement and utilization of time was a virtue.<sup>33</sup> In the fifteenth century, when Time made his debut with an hourglass, Temperance had long ago forsaken hers for a clock. Although there is one example of a mechanical clock on a *cassone* of the mid *Quattrocento* (Fig. 49), the fact that illustrators of that period still preferred to represent time by the hourglass indicates that these were not interchangeable symbols. The regularity of clockwork had become a simile for the regularity of man's body and spirit when regulated by reason.<sup>34</sup> The hourglass conveyed the idea, not of accurate measurement but of the brevity of human life. It was a perfect object to express the value that men attached to the brief time allotted them. Concurrent with the appearance of the hourglass in Italian art, there was new emphasis on a more practical approach to time in religious and secular literature. Statements such: *chi troppo dorme tempo perde*,<sup>35</sup> and . . . *che l'tempo che n'e imposto, piu utilmente compartir si vuole* are typical of fourteenth century Italian literature.<sup>36</sup> Leon Battista Alberti

<sup>33</sup> See Lynn White Jr., "The Iconography of Temperantia and the Virtuousness of Technology," in Theodore K. Rabb & Jerrod E. Seigel (eds.), *Action and Conviction in Early Modern Europe*, Princeton, 1969, 197–219.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

<sup>35</sup> "He who sleeps excessively loses time", Paolo da Certaldo (14th c.), *Il libro di buon costumi*, ed. Schiaffini, Florence, 1945.

<sup>36</sup> "for the time which is allotted to us must be more usefully proportioned", Dante, *Divina Commedia, Purgatorio*, XXIII, trans. Carlyle-Wicksteed, New York, 1950. Domenico Cavalca devoted several chapters of his *Disciplina spirituale* (ed. Schiaffini, Rome, 1957), XIX, XX, XXI, to the loss of time and the need to conserve and keep account of it. See Alberto Tenenti, *Il senso della morte e l'amore nella vita del Rinascimento, Francia e Italia*, Torino, 1957, ch. 2; Jacques LeGoff, "Le temps du travail dans la crise du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle: du temps médiéval au temps moderne," *Le Moyen Âge*, LXIX, 1963, 597–613 and "Au Moyen Âge: temps de l'église et temps du marchand," *Annales*, XV, 1969, 417–33; Richard R. Quinones, *The Renaissance Discovery of Time*, Cambridge, MA, 1972 and "Time and Historical



Fig. 48. *Triumph of Time*, North Italian illumination, 1459, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vind. 2649, fol. 46r.



Fig. 49. *Triumph of Time*, Florentine cassone (detail), ca. 1450, Trieste, Biblioteca Civica.

expressed the humanist's sense of time by saying it was the most precious thing man could call his own.<sup>37</sup> The hourglass also bore the connotation of impending death that was inherent in Petrarch's attitude to time. It was probably shortly after its appearance in the *Trionfo del Tempo* illustrations that the hourglass became an attribute of death.<sup>38</sup> It can therefore be assumed that the illustrators of the *Trionfo del Tempo* were responsible for introducing the time-death motif that would widely be adopted in painting, print and sepulchral art of the High Renaissance.

Values" (as in note 3), and 38–56; J.J.A. Mooij, *Time and Mind, the History of a Philosophical Problem*, Leiden & Boston, 2005, 104–20.

<sup>37</sup> Leon Battista Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, in Cecil Grayson (ed.), *Opere Volgari*, Bari, 1960, I, 168–69.

<sup>38</sup> E.g. the hourglass appears with the motto *finem* in a Florentine medal made for Paolo Giustiniano before 1500. See allegories of Dürer, Hans Baldung Grien and many others of this period, especially in the north, where Death carries an hourglass.

*Eclecticism and Experimentation: 1460–80*

Most of the Florentine *Trionfi* manuscripts belonging to this period were either illuminated in the atelier of Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico (active till 1485) or show the influence of his style. The tendency there was basically conservative but some iconographic innovations were introduced. This period is also represented by two series of engravings produced in Florence, two manuscripts from Naples, a set of miniatures from northern Italy (probably by a French artist) that were probably copied from the early series of Florentine engravings, an incunabulum of 1478 illuminated at Padua and ivory *cassone* panels executed for the marriage of Paola Gonzaga and Leonardo di Gorizia (ca. 1477), presumably by a Mantuan artist. This is a period of iconographic experimentation and eclecticism. Antique symbols of time first appeared in *Trionfo del Tempo* illustrations after 1460. These were depicted in conjunction with late medieval motifs that were adapted to the theme from other contexts. Depictions of age and decay became more prominent.

Among the motifs adopted from medieval precedents were the sun and moon, which made their first appearance in the Florentine engraving (Fig. 50) and were repeated twice in the unique composition of the Neapolitan miniature (Fig. 51). The inspiration may have come from Petrarch's reference to the infinite rotation of day and night: *dì e notte rotando per la strada ritonda ch'è infinità*,<sup>39</sup> but the visual representation was traditional. From the fifth century the sun and moon appeared in the upper left and right hand corners of the crucifixion scene. In cosmic diagrams they were located to the left and right of *Annus*, recalling the statement by Plato that the sun and moon were created for defining and preserving the numbers of time.<sup>40</sup> Perhaps the illuminator knew that the sun and moon, duplicated in this miniature, and the busts of winds below, were motifs of classical derivation, yet the form and context reveal his dependence on medieval sources.

At this stage, we find iconographic configurations that are indirect derivations of time-related motifs in late classical sources. In the Neapolitan *Trionfo*, for example, the combined motifs of luminaries and life-cycle, are interrelated in the same way as luminaries and zodiacal cycle in late

<sup>39</sup> "wheeling ever, day and night, in my round course that never comes to an end", *Trionfo del Tempo*, lines 29–30, trans. Wilkins, 1962.

<sup>40</sup> *Timaeus*, 38B–D.



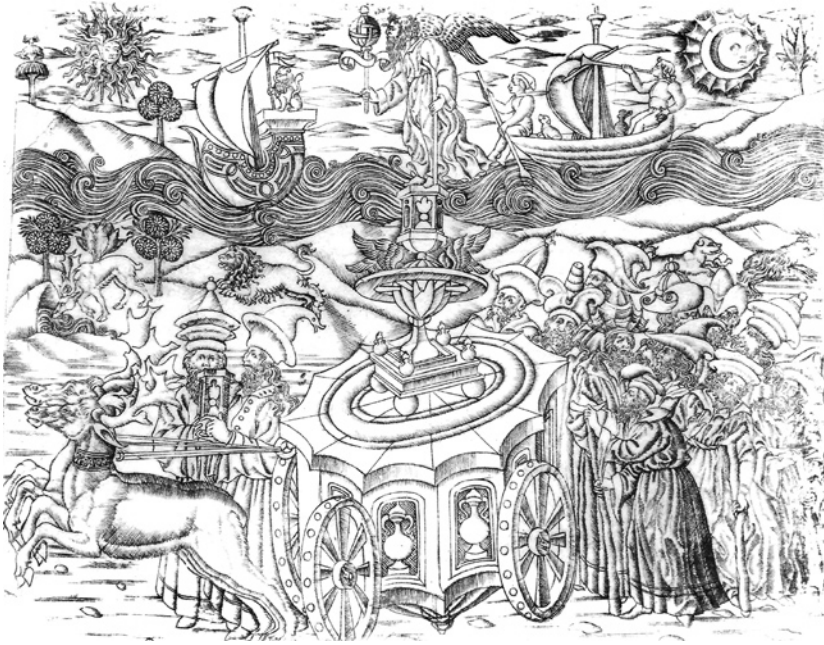


Fig. 50. *Triumph of Time*, Florentine engraving from *Trionfi* series, ca. 1460–1470, London, British Library, Department of Prints and Drawings. © The British Library Board.

antique Mithraic reliefs (Fig. 7). The latter were rediscovered in the mid *Cinquecento* and had no influence on Renaissance art until that time; nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the use of temporal imagery has a common basis. The antique relief and the fifteenth century *Trionfo del Tempo* illustration convey conceptions of time by means of astronomical and periodic signifiers and were comprehensible as such to respective viewers. Astronomical observation had been the means for time computation from time immemorial. When the Neapolitan miniaturist illustrated this idea by depicting a scholar, perhaps Petrarch, who measures the sand in a celestial hourglass with a compass, he was introducing the theme of time measurement into the *Trionfo*. When God held a compass in medieval art it was to define his role as supreme Creator, but here it is the scholar who uses the compass to measure time. This secular transformation anticipates the theme of time-measurement in humanist iconography, which will be illustrated below.

In the same Neapolitan allegory *Fortuna* is turning the Ages of Man on her wheel. We have noted the association between Time, Fortune and the



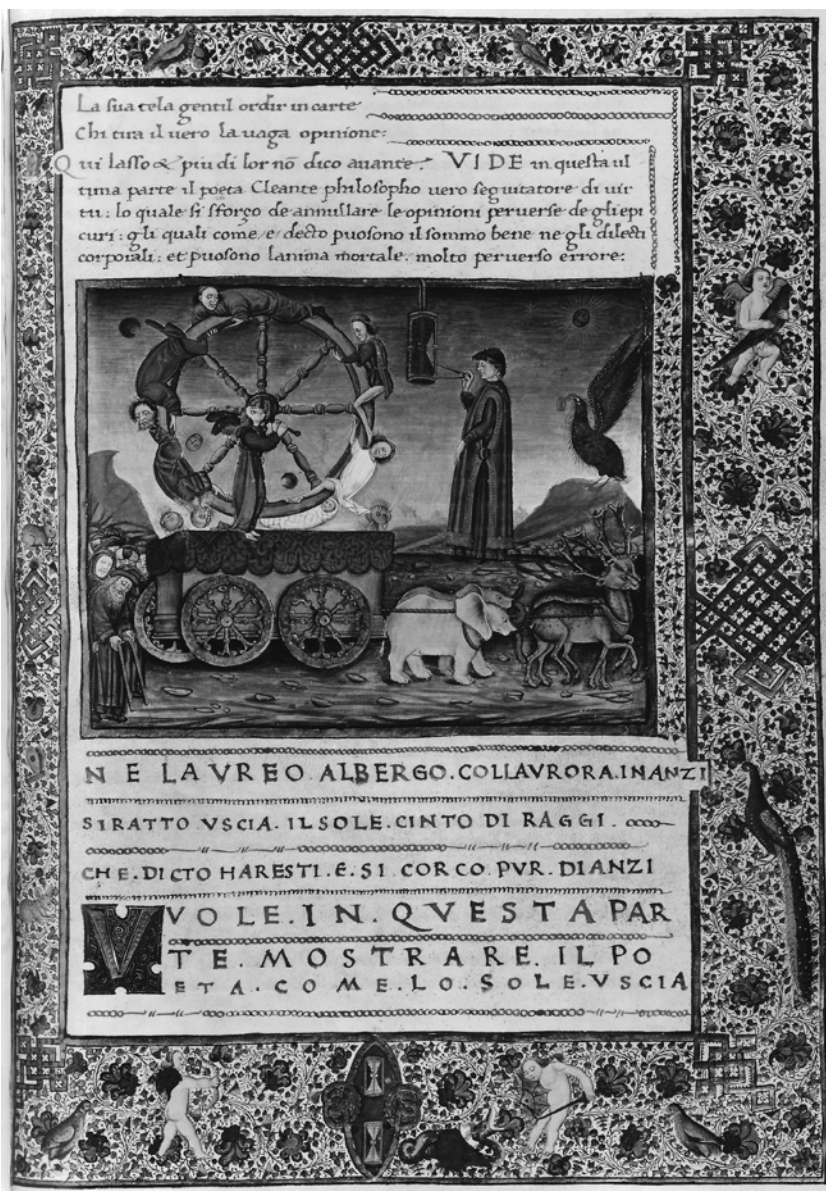


Fig. 51. *Triumph of Time*, Neapolitan miniature, MS. 78 D 11, fol. 204r, second half of the fifteenth century, Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett.

Wheel of Life in a French illustration of about fifty years earlier. *Temps*, identified with *Mère Nature*, was uniquely personified as a three-headed woman standing upon the wheel of life with *Fortuna Meretrix* below (Fig. 23). Time and Fortune were juxtaposed there as two interrelated aspects of nature, anticipating this same association in the Neapolitan illumination and others of the *Trionfo del Tempo*, as well as later Renaissance allegories.

Alongside motifs, such as luminaries, the hourglass, the Wheel of Life and personified *Fortuna*, which were familiar from late medieval art, this artist also integrated the late antique motif of the solar phoenix on a hill, bathed by solar rays, as symbol of self-renewing time.<sup>41</sup> An eclectic mixture of medieval and classical and of linear and cyclic motifs is typical in this transitional period and demonstrates the experimental approach involved in visually expressing attitudes and concepts for which there were no ready made models. The basic pattern established in the 1440s, and still preserved after forty years of *Trionfi* illustrations, was not adequate to express the complexities of time as an abstract process, as a psychological or moral attitude, or even as a dimension of existence. An attempt to explain this conservative phenomenon, as well as subsequent transformations that took place in the sixteenth century, will be made among the concluding remarks of this chapter.

The most significant though isolated innovation of this period involves the transformation of Time himself. In a Florentine manuscript of 1468, Time is an ominous figure seated on the world globe, like the *Pantocrator*, and devouring his children (Fig. 52). It should be underlined that this is the only extant *Trionfo* illustration of Time devouring a child before the sixteenth century. The iconography derives from the traditional image of Saturn, but the idea was based on the saying *Tempus edax rerum*, which had been and continued to be one of the most common literary metaphors of time.<sup>42</sup> Despite the popularity of this theme in literature, however,

<sup>41</sup> In the *Physiologus* the phoenix was a symbol of Christ and in Christian texts and art it became a symbol of resurrection. But the model for the phoenix on the hill is unmistakably classical, as can be seen by comparison with a 5th c. mosaic floor from Antioch, now in the Louvre. See François Baratte, *Catalogue des mosaïques romaines e paléochrétiennes du Musée du Louvre*, Paris, 1978, 92–7, figs. 87, 93 & cover-plate. For its appearance on coins, see Doro Levi, “Aion,” *Hesperia*, 1944, 269–314. On iconography, see Roelof Van den Broek, *The Myth of the Phoenix*, Leiden, 1972.

<sup>42</sup> Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XV. Cf. Giovanni Boccaccio, *De casibus virorum illustrium*, I, c. 1358; Cristoforo Landino, *Su roma quasi distrutta*, from *Xandria*, XXX, c. 1458; Shakespeare, *Triolis and Cressida*, III, 3, 145–50. Ascanio Condivi interpreted the allegories of Michelangelo's Medici Chapel as: *il tempo che consuma il tutto*; see *The Life of Michelangelo*

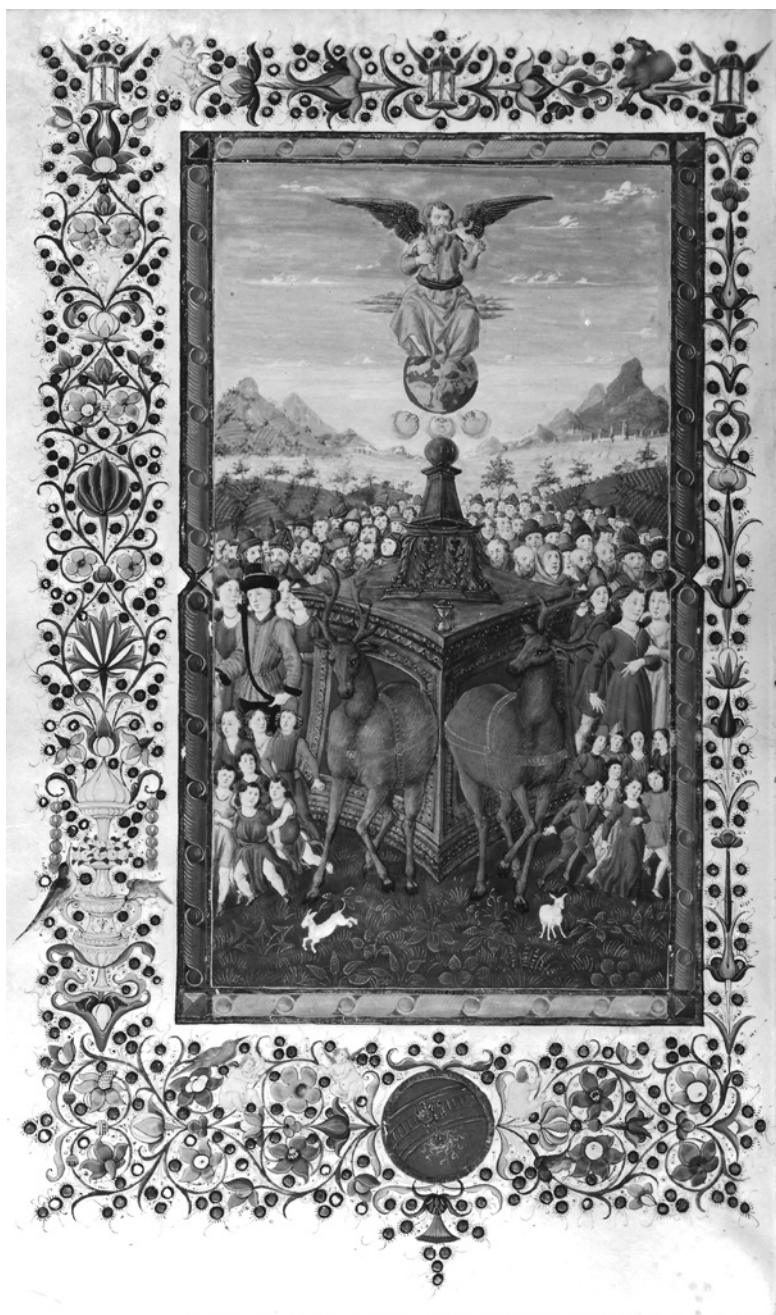


Fig. 52. *Triumph of Time*, Florentine illumination, MS. Ital. 548, fol. 47v, 1468, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Italian *Trionfi* illustrators continued to depict the benign version (e.g. Figs. 53, 54) until the printer Gabriele Giolito de' Ferrari revived the devouring theme seventy-five years later in his Venetian edition of 1543 (Fig. 57). In my estimation, this is not only a sign of conservatism on the part of the illustrators, whose dependence on models was counteractive to change. The rejection of such a violent interpretation in the 1470s and 80s can also be attributed to the contemporary preference for the decorative, fashionable and refined both in Florentine and north Italian art. Florentine illustrators of the *Trionfi* seem to have been more inclined than others to depicting genre scenes. The most eclectic use of genre scenes is found in the Florentine engraving containing the six allegories of one plate (Fig. 58). Among the unconventional additions to the basic *Trionfo del Tempo* scheme we encounter images of popular culture. These are duly explained to the unsophisticated viewer by inscriptions bearing the message that love, strife and games are ended by time. Thus, the vanity of knights in battle, a romantic couple playing music, and a duel of fools are juxtaposed with a corpse in its grave, accompanied by various captions, such as: *perme passato questo tempo, ogni cosa el tempo a finira* and *vedete hio fu morto dal tempo* ("For me this time has passed", "everything is finished by time" and "look, time caused my death").

The introduction of contemporary genre elements in illustrations facilitated the conversion of abstract and literary aspects in Petrarch's text into more palatable means of expression, thus enabling the reader to identify with it on his own terms. While these simplistic interpretations may not have done justice to Petrarch's lofty speculations, they nevertheless reflected not only the naivety of the illustrators but also widespread popularity of the *Trionfi*, by then a classic of the *volgare* medium that was accessible to a broad segment of the population. The illuminator of one contemporary Florentine manuscript chose to illustrate the verses where Petrarch described the brevity of his life: *e quanto posso al fine m'apparecchio, pensando al breve viver mio, nel quale stamani era un fanciullo ed or son vecchio*,<sup>43</sup> creating a visual analogy between a young child and an old man by giving each of them a walking apparatus. The image of an old man, aided in his labored progress by a walking apparatus, was later conjoined with the popular motto *Ancora imparo*, in a satirical

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by Ascanio Condivi, Trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl, ed. Helmut Wohl, University Park, PA., 1999, 67.

<sup>43</sup> "This morn I was a child and now I am old." *Trionfo del Tempo*, lines 58–60, trans. Wilkins, 1962. Illustrated in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Canon. Ital. 62, fol. 182v.





Fig. 53. *Triumph of Time*, from *Trionfi*, MS. 755, fol. 59v, early 16th c., Baltimore, Walters Art Museum.





Fig. 54. [COL. PL. 7] *Triumph of Time*, illumination to Petrarch's *Trionfi*, from *Le Cose Volgari*, Venice, Aldus Manutius, 1514. © Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth. Reproduced by permission of Chatsworth Settlement Trustees.



Fig. 55. [COL. PL. 8] Illuminated title-page of *Trionfi*, from Petrarch, *Le Cose Volgari*, Venice, Aldus Manutius, 1514. © Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth. Reproduced by permission of Chatsworth Settlement Trustees.





Fig. 56. [COL. PL. 9] Illuminated title-page of *Sonetti e Canzoni*, from Petrarch, *Le Cose Volgari*, Venice, Aldus Manutius, 1514. © Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth. Reproduced by permission of Chatsworth Settlement Trustees.



HAVENDO IL POETA NEL  
PRECEDENTE TRIONFO  
DIMOSTRATO.

CHE LA FAMA DELLE OPERATION DE GLI  
Huomini, dopo la morte ancora resta tra noi, hora in que-  
sto intitolato del tempo, mostra quello final-  
mente ogni memoria annichilare.



IL TRIONFO DEL TEMPO.

Argomento  
del presen-  
te Trionfo.



**D**E L'aureo albergo  
cò l'aurea inàzi  
Si ratto uscìna'l sol  
cinto di raggi;  
Che detto baretti, e  
si corcò pur diàzi  
Alzato un poco, co  
me fanno i suggi,  
Guardosì intorno; & a se stesso disse,  
Che pensi; homai conuen, che più cura haggi.  
Et co; s'un'huom famoso in terra nisse,

**S**IAMO al quinto stato  
dell'anima pervenuti, nel-  
quale il tempo qui fra  
noi tutti i suoi successi & ac-  
cidenti ultimamente ammor-  
za, E perche nella conseguita  
fama de gli huomini più diffi-  
cultà vien'a patire, il Poeta in-  
roduce'l sole, che ogni tem-  
po pastorisce, e termina, d'es-  
si huomini, quasi come di suoi  
emuli, dolersi, dimostrando il  
veloce corso, che per essa lor fa-  
ma eltinguere, li uide ripigliare,

Fig. 57. *Triumph of Time*, woodcut from *Il Petrarca*, (originally printed by Giolito, Venice, 1543) Valgrisi (pr.), Venice, 1560, Museo Correr, G33. Archivio Fotografico, Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia.

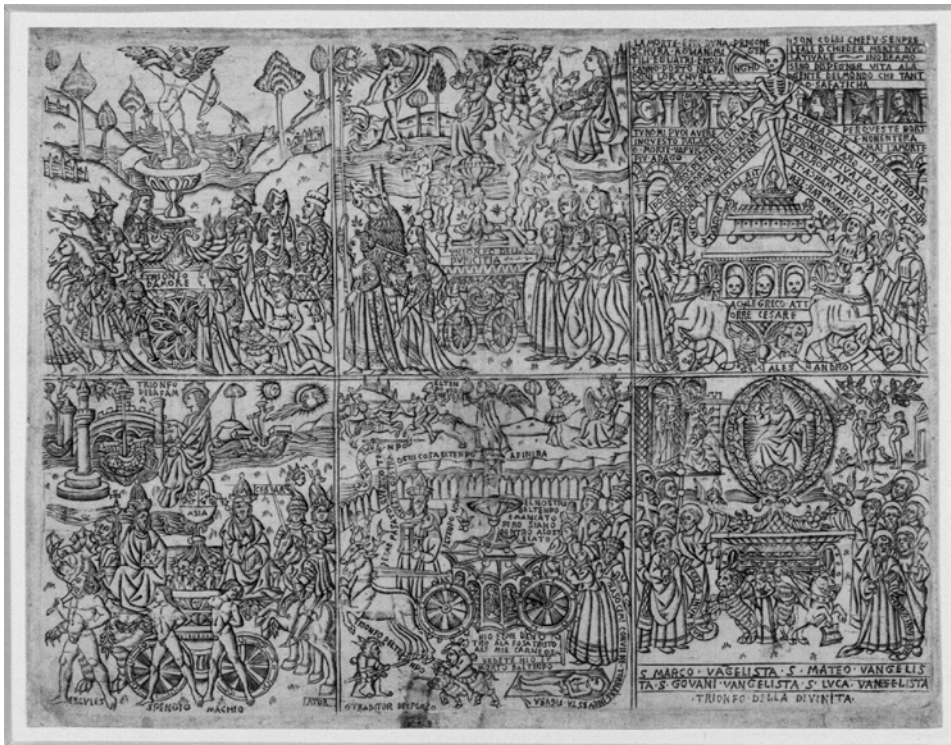


Fig. 58. *Six Petrarchan Triumphs*, Florentine engraving, ca. 1460–1470, Vienna, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung Albertina.



engraving executed by Girolamo Fagioli of Bologna (ca. 1538) for Don Martino, ambassador of the King of Portugal in Rome.<sup>44</sup> The inscription in the lower margin of Fagioli's engraving: "Keep learning as long as you live, from boyhood to old age" is derived from Seneca's *Epistolae morales ad Lucilium* (1st c. B.C.).<sup>45</sup> It was very much in character that Michelangelo, himself an octogenarian, inscribed the words *Ancora imparo* in the margin of his sketch of an old man (ca. 1562). But the old man with his walking apparatus would not reappear in *Trionfi* illustrations until the German artist George Pencz used it there in the second quarter of the sixteenth-century (Fig. 69).<sup>46</sup> It was then readopted in Italy when a fresco painter copied the Pencz engraving on a ceiling in Palazzo Lamba-Doria in Savona.

The theme of death was indirectly and symbolically suggested in the *Trionfo del Tempo* illustrations, but realistic images of death were still avoided. This may be attributed to the separation of the two themes in Petrarch's text. But the hourglass that appeared in almost every illustration produced between 1460 and 1480 represented temporality and death. A poetic allegory of temporal flux and the instability of fortune was created by the engraver who transformed the background of the triumphal scene into a turbulent river carrying ships with sails (Fig. 50). The flag bearing *marzocco*, symbol of Florence, in the first boat, suggests that the *Trionfo* illustration, perceived on a second level of reading, propounded a message of local patriotism with probable political connotations. The stag drinking on the left, unaware that it is about to be accosted by a lion, introduces a moralistic tone by adapting a religious motif of persecution and salvation to the secular time allegory.<sup>47</sup> *La schiera degli sciocchi*

<sup>44</sup> This is mentioned by Vasari, *Vite*, Book VI, in the *Life of Niccolo Saggi*. The invention was formerly attributed by Adam von Bartsch (*The Illustrated Bartsch*, 27 (14), part 2, 93, 400 (302) to Baccio Bandinelli and the print was tentatively assigned to Agostino Veneziano. See Susan Boorsh, "Salviati and Prints: The Question of Fagioli," in *Francesco Salviati e la Bella Maniera*, Rome, 2001, 499–518.

<sup>45</sup> Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Moral Epistles (Epistolae morales ad Lucilium)*, vol. II, trans. Richard. M. Grummere, Cambridge, Mass., 1917–25, Epistles 66–92.

<sup>46</sup> Metal engravings from the *Trionfi* series by George Pencz, ca. 1525–50, are located in the Museo Correr, Venice.

<sup>47</sup> The symbolism of the stag in Christian literary and artistic tradition derived first and foremost from passages in *Psalm 41* of the *Old Testament*: 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?' (Ps. 41, 1–2). The hart or the stag, in his desire for water, signifies the soul thirsting for the true fountain of Christianity—the source of Salvation or eternal life. Further on in *Psalm 41* the persecution of the believer is introduced: 'I will say unto God my rock. Why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning

(the throng of fools) following the chariot seems to be admonished for its passivity.

*Antique Revival and Renaissance Innovations: 1480–1500*

Nine illustrated editions of Petrarch's *Trionfi* were printed in Italy between 1488 and 1500; six of these contained original woodcuts. Most of these books were printed in Venice, two came from Milan, and only the 1499 Pacini edition was issued in Florence (Fig. 66) (Appendix II). The majority of the woodcuts were nevertheless variations on a series of Florentine engravings printed sometime between 1470 and 1490 (Fig. 59). Four manuscripts that can be attributed to the last two decades of the century, all originating in northern Italy, and a series of panel paintings attributed to the Mantegna school, form a homogeneous group.<sup>48</sup> The *Trionfo del Tempo* painted in Florence by Jacopo del Sellaio about 1480 cannot be classified iconographically either with the incunabula woodcuts or the northern miniatures, but it combines elements from both groups (Fig. 60).

It has been noted that the earliest depiction of the mechanical clock in a *Trionfo del Tempo* illustration belongs to the mid-*Quattrocento*, but subsequent clocks did not appear until the last two decades of the century. As it seems to be an ideal image of time, it is surprising that the mechanical clock was adopted so late in these illustrations. Actually, by this period clocks had long since been adopted as symbols of Temperance. In portrait paintings of the mid *Quattrocento* they were interchangeable with the hourglass as symbols of man's finite existence. In like manner, the clock would replace the hourglass of the scholarly saint in his study as, for example, in Botticelli's fresco of St. Augustine in the *Ognissanti* (c. 1480). Botticelli placed the clock in front of an open page of Pythagorean geometry and juxtaposed it with a geocentric armillary sphere (Fig. 61). Beyond the obvious allusion to Liberal Art disciplines, these attributes of St. Augustine represented the immutable laws of time and space

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because of the oppression of the enemy?" (Ps. 41, 9). The earliest illustrations of *Psalm 41* already showed the theme of persecution as a stag being chased by hounds in a scene of the hunt.

<sup>48</sup> Cod. L. 101, Victoria and Albert Museum, London; cod. 139 Mazz., Biblioteca Civica Guarneriana, S. Daniele del Friuli; Ms. Poet. Et roman 6, Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel und Landesbibliothek, Kassel; and Barb. lat. 3962, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; see Appendix I. Six *Trionfi* painted on wood are in the Kress Collection, Denver, CO. See C. Furlan, "I Trionfi della Collezione Kress: una proposta attributiva e divagazioni sul tema," *Arte Veneta*, XXVII, 1973, 81–90.



Fig. 59. *Triumph of Time*, Florentine engraving from *Trionfi* series, ca. 1470–1490, London, British Library, Department of Prints and Drawings. © The British Library Board.



Fig. 60. [COL. PL. 10] Jacopo del Sellaio, *Triumph of Time*, panel painting from a series of four *Trionfi*, ca. 1480, Fiesole, Museo Bandini.

studied by the contemporary humanistic ecclesiast. Jacopo del Sellaio, probably under the influence of Botticelli whose style he imitated, introduced a similar clock into his *Trionfo del Tempo* at about the same time. As no other complete clock was depicted in the *Trionfi* of this period, it may be assumed that Botticelli was indirectly instrumental in introducing the clock as a symbol in the *Trionfo del Tempo*. Upon the clock-foiot Jacopo balanced a traditional version of Father Time with a crutch, an hourglass and a dragon. Two winged *all'antica putti* turn a notched wheel at the bottom of the clock that appears to rotate the hour dial. Above the wheel, with the sun painted on its center, the mechanism of the verge escapement is shown in detail. Flanking the base of the clock are two dogs, one black and one white. A typical Florentine entourage symmetrically frames the frontal chariot on either side. In the foreground are broken columns, torn manuscripts and other remnants of the past. In the upper left hand corner Sol in Taurus follows the image of Aurora. If we held any doubts about the innovative nature of the clock as a symbol in





Fig. 61. Botticelli, *St. Augustine in His Study*, fresco, ca. 1480, Florence, Church of the Ognissanti.

this painting, the modified frontal presentation of the chariot, additional symbols, and the unprecedented juxtaposition of the clock and hourglass are combined to clarify the message. While the sand passing through the hourglass indicated that time was running out, the clock was a continuous timepiece, which represented time as an abstract measurable phenomenon. The sun painted on the round wheel reflects the circular course of the cosmic timepiece personified in the sky. *Sol in Taurus* represents the beginning of spring or the renewal of nature's cycle and of prosperity. Black and white dogs, representing Night and Day, and the little dragon are likewise symbolic of cyclic renewal.<sup>49</sup> These images convey the idea that time is continuous, but the hourglass and the winged personification show that what time measures is finite. The use of clock symbolism alongside traditional images of destruction served to visually differentiate between time's perpetuity as opposed to the discontinuity of tempo-

<sup>49</sup> Black and white were often used to symbolize darkness and light or day and night; e.g. Days and Nights were represented by dark and light colored personifications in the 9th c. manuscript of Ptolemy, MS. Vat. gr. 1291, fol. 9, *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*.



ral existence. The clock measured discontinuous units of time, but the measure was not equated with that being measured. As time was isolated from events and given the status of an independent entity, it became an increasingly potent enemy of man. A comparison of this imagery with that of the earlier illustrations reveals that the *Trionfo del Tempo* was undergoing modifications and that new imagery was necessary to express changing concepts in their contemporary cultural contexts.

Another motif that makes its first appearance in Jacopo del Sellaio's *Trionfo del Tempo* is the dragon of time. It is related to the *draco-serpens* subsequently depicted in the woodcuts of 1488 and 1508 (Fig. 62). Panofsky assumed Jacopo's dragon to be an attribute of Saturn which, according to Martianus Capella, signified the year.<sup>50</sup> But there are no indications that the artist identified his personification with Saturn. We have seen that the serpent had long been an original attribute of time, associated in antiquity with cyclic renewal, restoration and rebirth. As such, it was widely adopted as a solar symbol in Hellenistic and Roman iconography and became a favored image of deities in syncretistic cults of late antiquity, especially in those that promoted solar pantheism. The serpent was an attribute of *Aion*, personification of eternal temporal renewal, *Asclepius*, resurrecting god of medicine, and deities such as *Demeter*, *Serapis*, and *Mithras*, whose mysteries connected the death and rebirth of nature to that of man.<sup>51</sup> The *ouroboros*, or serpent biting its tail, was known in the Renaissance from monuments of late antiquity and was depicted, for example, as an attribute of *Chronico* in the so-called *tarocchi* of Mantegna during the second half of the *Quattrocento*. We may consequently conclude that the serpent was transmitted to Renaissance iconography as a symbol of cyclic renewal independent of its medieval association with Saturn.

The earliest *ouroboros* depictions in *Trionfo del Tempo* illuminations, however, which might be identified with Saturn, derive from the same north Italian area and approximate period as the *tarocchi*. In the initial of a Paduan manuscript Time is nude and holds a serpent biting its tail;

<sup>50</sup> Martianus Capella, *Nuptius Philologiae et Mercurii*, I, 70.

<sup>51</sup> See Part I, chapter 2 and discussions of serpent symbolism in; Doro Levi, "Aion," *Hesperia*, 1944, 302; Hans Liesegang, "The Mystery of the Serpent," in *The Mysteries, Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks*, New York, 1955; Francis McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries*, North Carolina, 1962, 81 & 170, pl. 1a & b, VIII, 4; Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion*, Boston, 1956, 1963, 116–17 and Joseph Campbell, *The Mythic Image*, Princeton, 1974, 294–96, 298, figs. 280–91. The explicit connection between the serpent's rejuvenation and the constant renewal of time was made in the 5th century by Nonnus, *Dionysiaca*, XLI, 180ff., and Horapollon, *Hieroglyphica*, 1. 2 & 64.



Fig. 62. *Triumph of Time*, woodcut from *Trionfi*, Gregorius de Gregoriis (pr.), Venice, 1508, Trieste, Biblioteca Civica.

another illumination, probably from Padua or Mantua, pictures Time as a Roman soldier carrying a sickle.<sup>52</sup> Since these manuscripts originated in the north, we may tentatively assume that it was there, and not in Florence, that the iconography of the *Trionfo del Tempo* was first modified in the spirit of the *Rinascimento dell'antichità*. In any case, the relatively late synthesis of the already established personification of Time with the image of Saturn as a god of time marks the convergence of two separate iconographic traditions.

Around 1480 vegetation symbolism was introduced to portray the decay of nature. Until then, rocky hills, lush foliage and romantic lakes characterized the ornamental landscapes of all six *Trionfi*. The appearance of barren hills and leafless trees in the Florentine engraving (Fig. 59) and then in most Florentine woodcuts, corresponds to a growing awareness of landscape symbolism in Italian art. Jacopo del Sellaio painted a few autumnal trees in a field of dead and broken tree stumps, but he further emphasized the theme of decay by scattered ruins. In the sixteenth century, ruins of a distinctly classical nature would replace the nondescript ruined edifice shown in most woodcuts of this period.

One of the most cryptic symbols appearing in the *Trionfo del Tempo* of the late *Quattrocento* is the bee. It appeared only once in the 1488 printed edition (Fig. 64) and never reappeared in this context. The bee is prominently placed in the upper right hand corner of the *Trionfo* beside a nude *putto* with a huge foliot, who stands on Time's chariot. Could this be an allusion to the sting of death, or to the soul escaping from the domain of time? The bee could also be a symbol of renewal, for like the phoenix it was considered in the ancient world to originate spontaneously.<sup>53</sup> Medieval bestiaries repeated the ancient legend that bees could be generated from a dead ox.<sup>54</sup> The combined depictions of the *draco-serpens*, the bee,

<sup>52</sup> Cod. L. 10-1947, c. 1465-70, Victoria & Albert Museum, London and Cod. 139 Mazz., late 15th c., Biblioteca Civica Guarneriana, S. Daniele del Friuli.

<sup>53</sup> Van den Broek (as in note 35), 187-88.

<sup>54</sup> See e.g. Virgil, *Georgics*, Book IV, 281-314; Lancelot. P. Wilkinson, *The Georgics of Virgil*, Cambridge, 1969, 106, 260-69. Note the connection between Virgil's account and the biblical one in *Judges*, 14, 8: "and behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion." For medieval sources, see McCulloch (as in note 45), 95-96. Although it does not seem to apply here, the bee also represented the virtue of solidarity in bestiary moralizations and sermons, the latter exemplified in a codex of sermons written by an Augustine friar Simon Cupersi in 1460, and this connotation was popularized towards the mid 16th c. and after, primarily in emblematic literature: see S. Cohen, *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*, Leiden & Boston, 2008, 11-12, 17 & 36. St Ambrose wrote a chapter on the bee in his *Hexameron* (4th c.), defending its spiritual meaning. The use

the armillary sphere and a *putto* with a foliot, in the woodcut of 1488, seem to underline the theme of cyclic time that is contrasted with the limited duration of human existence represented by the hourglass.

In the third series of Florentine engravings (ca. 1470–90) four birds were introduced above the figure of Time (Fig. 59). The theme was repeated in the printed editions of Piero de Plasiis (1490), Scinzenzeler (1494), Zarotus (1494) and Pacini (1499) (Figs. 63, 65 & 66) and then disappeared. Birds as symbols of the volatile were inherently associated with time. Petrarch made numerous references to flight, birds and wings in his *Trionfo del Tempo*. He compared the speed of time to that of the falcon's flight.<sup>55</sup> Historians and poets, he wrote, take flight by virtue of their own loftiness of spirit and thereby rise above the multitude.<sup>56</sup> But the line that appears to be most relevant to the four birds refers to the flight of hours, days, years and months: *che volan l'ore e' giorni e gli anni e mesi*.<sup>57</sup>

We may summarize the above by noting that there are two main thematic orientations in these *Quattrocento* illustrations of time. On the one hand, there are images, such as periodic units, cosmic manifestations, cyclic motifs and mechanical clocks, that express the nature of time as an abstract measurable phenomenon; on the other, there is an increase in representations that illustrate the corrupting effects of time on human existence. Around 1480 a new theme, the decay of nature, was introduced by means of vegetation symbolism. Until the last two decades of the *Quattrocento*, rocky hills, lush foliage and lakes were repeated as stereotyped backdrops in all the *Trionfi* illustrations. In the third series of Florentine engravings and subsequent *Quattrocento* woodcuts the lush background is replaced by barren hills and leafless trees. The *Trionfo del Tempo*, in

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of the bee as *exemplum* was further promoted by the *Legenda Aurea: The Golden Legend of Jacopo de Voragine*, trans. G. Eyan & H. Ripperger, New York, 1969, 25. In Renaissance literature and art the bee was a sign of industry, creativity and wealth; a community of honey bees was employed by political theorists as a model of human society, based on metaphors in Aristotle, Plato, Virgil (*Georgics*, IV) and Seneca (*De clementia*, I, 19). See a discussion of these aspects in William Elders, *Symbolic Scores: Studies in the Music of the Renaissance*, Leiden, 1994, 36–39. The metaphor of spiritual fortitude in repelling the aggression of bees, popular in later emblems, was inspired by the biblical passage: "They surround me like bees at the honey, they attack me as fire attacks brushwood, but in the Lord's name I will drive them away" (*Psalms*, 118, 12).

<sup>55</sup> *Poi che questo ebbe detto, disdegnando riprese il corso, più veloce assai che falcon d'alto a sua prede volando, Trionfo del Tempo*, lines 31–33.

<sup>56</sup> *Vidi una gente andarsen queta queta, senza temer di tempo o di sua rabbia, che gli avea in guardia istorico o poeta. Di loro par che più d'altri invidia s'abbia, che per se stessi son levati a volo uscendo for della commune gabbia. Op. cit.*, lines 88–93.

<sup>57</sup> *Op. cit.*, line 76.





Fig. 63. *Triumph of Time*, Florentine woodcut from *Sonetti e Trionfi*, Inc. Pal. D.7.4.12., Pietro de Piasi, Venice, 1490; Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale.





Fig. 64. *Triumph of Time*, woodcut from incunabulum of *Trionfi*, B.Rizzo da Novara (pr.), Venice, 1488, The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.



Fig. 65. *Triumph of Time*, metal-cut from *Trionfi*, Antonio Zaroto (pr.), Milan, 1494, Inc. A.3.30(1), Bergamo, Biblioteca Civica.





Fig. 66. *Triumph of Time*, woodcut from *Trionfi*, Piero Pacini (publ.) Florence, 1499, Inc. 70.8.B.8., Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emanuele.

the series of the Kress Collection (Denver), figures a large tree with one verdant branch surviving on a trunk that has been severed in the middle. The severed tree is analogous to the elder, whose precarious hold on life is equally volatile. During the same period Jacopo del Sellaio painted autumnal trees, with scattered ruins and a torn manuscript in a field of dead and broken tree stumps. By the sixteenth century these depictions of decay in nature and civilization, manifesting progressive interest in landscape symbolism, would furthermore introduce the concept of retrospective time, concordant with Petrarch's text, as the nondescript ruins were replaced by fragments of classical architecture.

### *Transformations of Time in the Sixteenth Century*

What did artists of the *Cinquecento* contribute to the already established time-imagery of the *Trionfo del Tempo*? How were new concepts and attitudes demonstrated? Let us begin this investigation by reviewing the available sources.

Although Italian manuscripts of the *Trionfi* became rare, over fifty illustrated Italian editions, including reprints were published between 1500 and 1610 (Appendix II). In France illuminators were just discovering the *Trionfi* and fifteen illustrated editions were printed there between 1514 and 1568. French and Flemish tapestry series became the most colorful and decorative of all the *Trionfi* depictions (Fig. 67).<sup>58</sup> At the same time engravings produced by major German and Flemish printmakers introduced new variants and styles.

Most of the iconographic interpretations produced in Italy during the first half of the sixteenth century evolved out of the *Quattrocento* precedents. The transformation of Time from a decrepit and declining old man to a powerful destroyer took another forty years. The process began in the Gregorius edition of 1508, where Time carries a scythe and a serpent biting its tail (Fig. 62). The scythe, like the *draco-serpens*, both mistakenly identified

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<sup>58</sup> Tapestries of the *Trionfo del Tempo* are located in the Metropolitan Museum, New York; the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; the Palacio del la Generalidad, Barcelona; Hampton Court Palace, London and the Palacio Real, Madrid. All of the above are part of complete *Trionfi* series, except for that of London, with only three extant tapestries, and Madrid with five. See Adolfo Salvatore Cavallo, *Medieval Tapestries in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York, 1993, 463–78 and Thomas P. Campbell, "New Evidence of 'Triumphs of Petrarch' Tapestries in the Early Sixteenth Century, Part I: The French Court, *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 146, no. 1215, June, 2004, 376–85.



Fig. 67. *Triumph of Time*, tapestry, South Netherlands, ca. 1500–1530. Bequest of George D. Pratt, 1935, © Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, New York.



by Panofsky as attributes of Saturn, had an independent association with time in literature and art. As a tool of destruction and death the scythe could be placed in the hand of God, Death or Time.<sup>59</sup> Petrarch repeatedly paired Time with Death in the *Trionfo dell'Eternità* and described Time as a destroyer. It was therefore possible to interchange their attributes, so that Time took over the scythe of Death just when Death acquired the hourglass of Time. Other allegorical depictions of Time with a scythe, appearing after about 1490, have no other attributes to link them with Saturn. Furthermore, the scythe does not appear in those illustrations that identify Time with the image of Saturn devouring his children. Consequently, we must reject the theory that Time's iconography, even in its early *Cinquecento* form, is basically Saturnine.

A beautiful collection of Venetian illuminations is found in a rare edition of the *Trionfi*, included in *Le Cose Volgari*, printed by Aldus Manutius in 1514 (Figs. 54–56).<sup>60</sup> By that time printed editions contained woodcut illustrations, but Aldus usually published books without illustrations and this volume was richly illuminated on colored washes, in a painterly style of the Venetian *Cinquecento*, while basically following anachronistic iconography. The fact that this rare volume was printed on vellum, rather than the usual paper, and was lavishly enriched by hand painted illustrations and two exquisite title-pages a decade after the last flowering of hand-illuminated books (Figs. 55 & 56), suggests that it was commissioned for a noble patron. Based on an eighteenth century inscription at the end of the volume, historical evidence and the iconography of the enigmatic title-pages, I have suggested that this book was illuminated at different times for different patrons and that the title pages were added after 1545 for Eleonora di Toledo.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Panofsky (as in note 2) 77, note 25, mistakenly attributed the image of Death with a sickle or scythe in 11th and 12th century art to *Apocalypse* XIV, 14–17. As Church Fathers, theologians and medieval artists knew, the figure on a cloud brandishing a sickle in this passage was not Death but Christ, or the Church personified. See for example commentaries on the *Apocalypse* by Eusebius and Thomas of Aquinas. Christ holds the sickle in Giotto's fresco of St. John's vision in the Peruzzi Chapel, Santa Croce. In Firadousi's *Sah-nameh* (c. 1010) a woodcutter mowing down the grass with a sharp sickle is a metaphor of Time destroying humans. Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Pedagogus*, ii, 10, 104, 3 translated in Jean Danielou, *A History of Early Church Doctrine before the Council of Nicaea*, London, II, 1973, 28.

<sup>60</sup> See S. Cohen, "An Aldine Volume of Petrarch Illuminated for a Prestigious Patron," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 73, 2010, 187–210.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, esp. 207–10. See Appendix I. Note the Medici *broncone* under the peacock in Fig. 56.

Between 1508 and 1543 about two-thirds of the Italian printed editions still contained the traditional personification of Time bent over his crutches.<sup>62</sup> Only one-third of these reproduced the Gregorius version. The turning point came in 1543 and 1547, when Giolito's new image of Time conflated with Saturn, as a virile nude devouring his children (Fig. 57), made the traditional image unfashionable, though not obsolete. French artists, who had independently created an idealized interpretation of the *Trionfo del Tempo* in the early sixteenth century (e.g. Fig. 68), now adopted the Italian version of the destroyer. Dutch and Flemish artists, such as Peter Breughel the Elder (c. 1525–69), Georg Pencz (1500–50), Pieter Coecke van Aelst (1502–50), Michel Coxie (1499–1592), Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574) and Jerome Wierix (ca. 1553–1610), were among those who devised new imagery to illustrate the theme of temporal destruction (Figs. 69–71).

In the 1540s the impotent elder of the *Quattrocento* was transformed into a muscular nude and his crutches were replaced by weapons, transforming him from a passive into an active figure. Soon after, Time was conceived in such diabolical terms that his lower limbs were transformed into goat-legs or sprouted claws. Both the goat-legs and claws were borrowed from the Renaissance iconography of the devil, disguised as a monk or angel, with protruding animal extremities exposing his true demonic nature, as often depicted in *The Temptation of Christ*. In the woodcut of the Rouille edition (Lyon, 1550) the winged figure of Time on a cloud, still holding his crutches and hourglass, conceals his lower limbs under drapery with only his clawed feet exposed (Fig. 72). The mild old man had undergone a complete transformation. First he had become a destroyer, then a devouring monster, and finally a demon.

How can we explain the radical transformation in the 1530s and 40s of the traditional iconography that had been maintained throughout most of the Renaissance? Multiple factors presumably generated or affected the altered perception of time and temporality reflected in the later illustrations. Among the historical events that precipitated an atmosphere of pessimism and fatalism in most Italian city-states were the Italian wars

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<sup>62</sup> A tondo on panel (49 cm. diameter) of Father Time (inscribed TEMPUS), supported by two crutches and accompanied by a child, is part of the Berenson collection at Villa I Tatti, Settignano. It was attributed to Matteo Balducci (Fontignano, doc. 1509–1555). According to Vasari, Balducci was a pupil of Pinturicchio and worked with him in Rome; see Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, New York & London, 1909, 137; 1932, 38; 1936, 33 and Franco Russoli, *The Berenson Collection*, Milano, 1964.



Fig. 68. *Triumph of Time*, French illumination, MS. Franç. 223, fol. 301v, late 15th or early 16th century, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.



Fig. 69. George Pencz, *Triumph of Time*, metal engraving, from *Trionfi Series*, 1525–1550, Venice, Museo Civico Correr, Archivio Fotografico, Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia.

of the first half of the sixteenth century. The Sack of Rome in 1527 constituted a major blow to the Holy See and the Eternal City. The 1530s were marked by political and religious instability. Soon after his election to the papacy in 1534 Paul III undertook measures to block the Reformation. With the Roman Inquisition and the Council of Trent (1545–63) a new era of religious oppression began. In 1530 the attempt to re-establish the Florentine Republic was suppressed through Spanish intervention. In 1535 the Duchy of Milan was annexed to the Habsburg Empire. Economic pressures ensued. Venice, where almost all *Cinquecento* editions of the *Trionfi* were printed, had to confront another war with the Ottomans between 1537 and 1540, which ended in the loss of several colonies and a severe crisis in international trade. In these same years, Italian, French and German writers were preoccupied with the horrible pestilence called the *Morbus Gallicus* (syphilis), which was generally conceived to be the scourge of god brought against the sins of man.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> See S. Cohen, "The Ambivalent Scorpio in Bronzino's London Allegory," in *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*, Leiden & Boston, 2008, 263–290.





Fig. 70. Philippe Galle, *Triumph of Time*, metal engraving, second quarter of the 17th century, after a design by Peter Breughel Sr. dated 1574, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Fig. 71. Johannes Galle, *Triumph of time and Death*, metal engraving from a series of five Triumphs entitled *Typus Naturae Humanae*, after designs by Jerome Wierix (d. 1629).

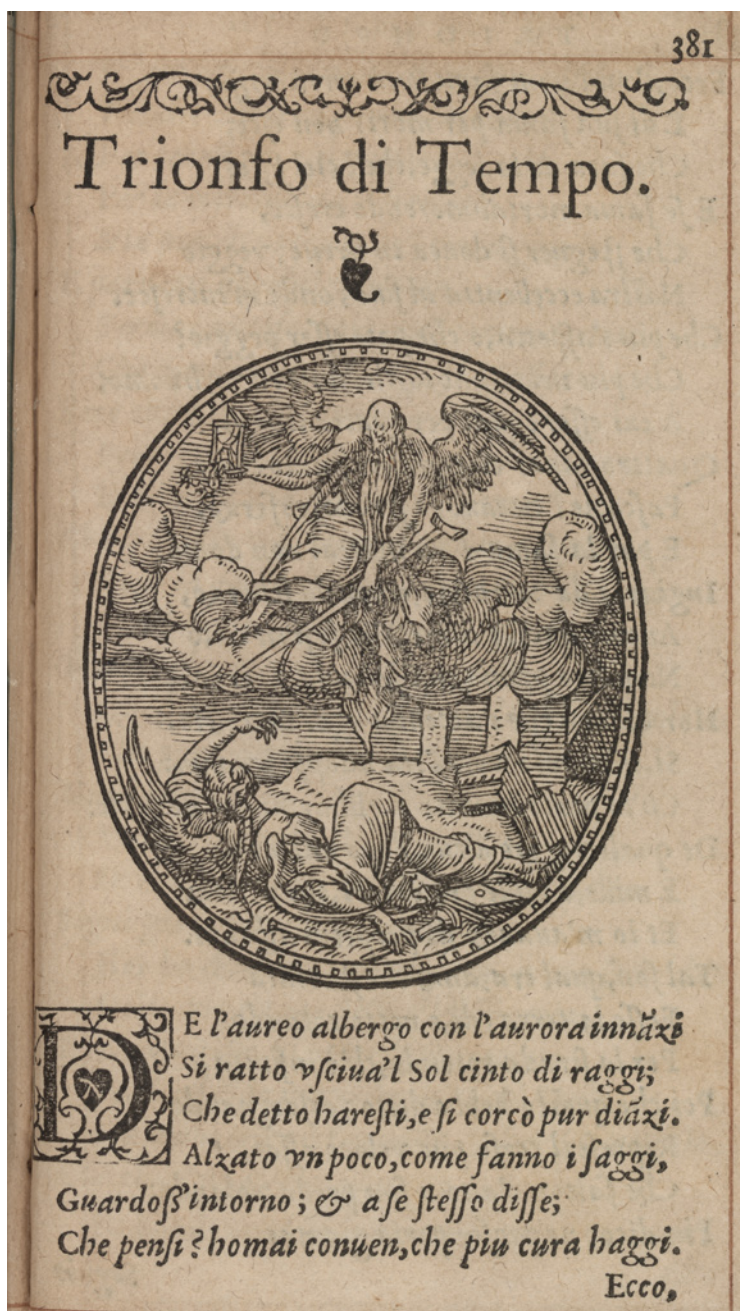


Fig. 72. *Triumph of Time*, woodcut from *Il Petrarca*, Rouille, Lyon, 1550, The New York Public Library, Rare Book Division, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

I would consider it an oversimplification, nevertheless, to interpret the changed attitude towards temporality exclusively in terms of political, social, cultural or economic crises that precipitated a sense of instability, anxiety and pessimism regarding the future. The ground had been prepared. We have witnessed an increasing preoccupation with an existentialist temporality, where time is a state of the mind, of consciousness and of affective sensibility, and as such is differentiated from an objective cosmic or mechanical concept of change. The perceived interrelation between these two concepts, although they were already implicit in the speculations of Aristotle and St. Augustine, found its first visual expression in illustrations of time towards the mid sixteenth century. This would not have been possible without the foregoing process that found its ultimate poetic expression in Petrarch's anthropocentric vision of the mutability of time.

Of major interest in this respect is the process of secularization reflected in the changing iconography of time that will be further examined in the following chapters. Petrarch in his *Trionfi* had established a clear differentiation between Time and Eternity. Although time had been one factor in the theocentric scheme of medieval cosmic illustrations, God had no place in the temporal world of Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo*. His readers knew, however, that God was just around the corner, literally in the next chapter, that of the *Trionfo dell'Eternità*. As long as the personification of Time remained an integral part of Petrarch's *Trionfi* illustrations, he would remain a pitiful but benign old man. But once he emerged from the framework of these illustrations into the sphere of secular allegory, as he did in the 1530s and 40s, this poignant protagonist became a powerful and ruthless destroyer. After that there was no way of resurrecting the benevolent old man.





## CHAPTER SEVEN

### TIME, VIRTUOUSNESS AND WISDOM IN GIORGIONE'S CASTELFRANCO FRESCO

Concurrent with the versions of triumphant Time illustrating Petrarch's poetic allegory, artists were introducing concepts of time in didactic and scholarly contexts. Salient examples are the studiolo programs, such as those of Federigo da Montefeltro at Urbino and Gubbio, executed in intarsia (ca. 1476), and the Castelfranco fresco attributed to Giorgione.<sup>1</sup> Their messages were conveyed by objects, arranged as illusionistic still-life compositions rather than personifications, and inscriptions or maxims that were enigmatic or nebulous, thus creating an intellectual challenge for the educated spectator.

#### Fantasia per mostrare l'arte

Vasari, who was bewildered and impressed by the incomprehensibility of Giorgione's Fondaco dei Tedeschi frescoes, wrote that the artist painted

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<sup>1</sup> See Pasquale Rotondi, *Il palazzo ducale di Urbino*, 2 vols., Urbino: Istituto Statale d'Arte per il Libro, 1950–51, Eng. Trans. *The Ducal Palace of Urbino*, London, 1969; Luciano Cheles, "The Inlaid Decorations of Federico da Montefeltro's Urbino Studiolo: an Iconographic Study," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, XXVI, 1982, 1, 1–46 and *Lo Studiolo di Urbino*, Ferrara, 1986. Cf. Cecil H. Clough, "Federico da Montefeltro's Private Study in his Ducal Palace of Gubbio," *Apollo*, 68–70, 1967, IV, 278–87; Luciano Cheles, *The Studiolo of Urbino: An Iconographic Investigation*, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986; Marcin Fabiański, "Federigo da Montefeltro's 'Studiolo' in Gubbio Reconsidered: Its Decoration and Its Iconographic Program: An Interpretation," *Artibus et historiae* 11, no. 21 (1990): 199–214; Pier Luigi Bagatin, *Le tarsie dello Studiolo d'Urbino*, Trieste, 1993; Cecil H. Clough, "Art as Power in the Decoration of the Study of an Italian Renaissance Prince: The Case of Federico da Montefeltro," *Artibus et historiae* 16, no. 31 (1995); Raggio, Olga, and Antoine M. Wilmering, *The Liberal Arts Studiolo from the Ducal Palace at Gubbio*, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996; Martin Kemp, "Making It Work: The Perspective Design of the Gubbio Studiolo," In Olga Raggio, *The Gubbio Studiolo and Its Conservation*, 1:69–77, New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999; David King, "The Astrolabe Depicted in the Intarsia of the Studiolo of Archduke Federico in Urbino," in *La scienza del ducato di Urbino*, ed. F. Vetrano, Flavio, Urbino: Accademia Raffaello, 2001, 101–39.

"secondo la sua fantasia" or "a sua fantasia per mostrare l'arte".<sup>2</sup> When reading through more recent literature on the undocumented fresco at Castelfranco one receives the impression that this "fantasia" or poetic license has sometimes been applied to the interpretations.<sup>3</sup> It has been generally accepted that the series of objects depicted in this fresco of the Casa Marta-Pellizzari represented the liberal and mechanical arts, but maxims inscribed in the fresco clearly indicate that more is involved.<sup>4</sup> Based on the assumption that Giorgione's subject matter is, by definition, veiled in a cloud of mystery, some writers have proposed iconographic theories based on what appears to be an arbitrary choice of texts or on a selective study of part of the images, to the exclusion of the rest. Several of the valuable ideas set forth have remained speculative. Lack of evidence to support one or another theory has left us with many open questions. Even Giorgione's authorship is in doubt.

The fresco of Castelfranco is a unique visual document of Venetian humanism at the turn of the century. It represents, as I intend to demonstrate, a transitional stage between the concepts of late medieval humanism, with its theocentric orientation, and the more secular self-conscious attitudes of the *Quattrocento studia humanitatis*. The fresco preserves

<sup>2</sup> Giorgio Vasari, "Vita di Giorgio di Castelfranco", *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, Novara, 1967, 418.

<sup>3</sup> For bibliography of the Castelfranco fresco before 1968, see Teresio Pignatti, *Giorgione*, London, 1971, 105. The primary publications thereafter are: Maurizio Calvesi, "La 'morte di bacio'. Saggio sull'ermetismo di Giorgione," *Storia dell'Arte*, 1770, nos. 7–8, 179–233; Giorgio Padoan, "Giorgione e la cultura umanistica," in *Giorgione, Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi per il 5° centenario della nascita* (29–31 Maggio 1978) Castelfranco Veneto, 1979, 25–36. Vittore Sgarbi, "Il fregio di Castelfranco e la cultura bramantesca," in *Giorgione, Atti*, 273–84; William Melczer, "Giorgione e l'ermetismo sincretico di Leone Ebreo," in *Giorgione, Atti*, 99–104; Maurizio Calvesi, "Il tema della sapienza nei Tre Filosofi," in *Giorgione, Atti*, 83–90; Giovanni Testori, "Giorgione, una luce per la natura," *Corriere della Sera*, June 3 1978; Giorgio Padoan, "Il mito di Giorgione intellettuale," in *Giorgione e l'umanesimo veneziano*, Firenze, 1981, I, 425–56; Augusto Gentili, "Per la demitizzazione di Giorgione: documenti, ipotesi, provocazioni," in *Giorgione e la cultura veneta tra '400 e '500*, Roma, 1981, 12–25; Vittore Sgarbi, "Riconoscizioni del catalogo di Giorgione: con proposte per la sua formazione e per l'opera della maturità," in *Giorgione e la cultura veneta*, 31–34; M. Pastore Stocchi, "G.B. Abioso e l'umanesimo astrologico a Treviso," in Michelangelo Muraro (ed.), *La letteratura, la rappresentazione, la musica al tempo e nei luoghi di Giorgione*, Roma, 1987, 17–37; Augusto Gentili, "The Castelfranco frieze: the great conjunction of 1503/04 and the decline of the arts," and Elisa Campani, Sandra Rossi & Paolo Spezzani, "Examination via x-ray and infrared reflectograph, and restoration of the Castelfranco Altarpiece," in Silvia Ferino-Pagden & Giovanna Nepi Sciré (eds.), *Giorgione, Myth and Enigma*, Milano, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> The maxims were first studied by Adriano Mariuz, "Appunti per una letteratura del fregio giorgionesco di Casa Marta Pellizzari," *Liceo ginnasio Giorgione*, Castelfranco Veneto, 1966, 49–70, followed by Padoan, 1981 (as in note 3).

remnants of late medieval symbolism alongside imagery which is either charged with new content or presented in new contexts, and thus looks forward to later iconographic developments. I suggest that by elucidating aspects of the iconography that have been overlooked in previous studies, it is possible to interpret the thematic content more accurately and to assign it its proper place in the context of contemporary cultural norms and educational practice of the Veneto. The marked focus on the theme of time and temporality in the fresco and its function in this didactic program will be shown to reflect a significant stage in the development of our theme in the early Renaissance.

This study will begin by examining the individual objects in the fresco in order to reveal their sources and meanings. This should enable us to identify a programmatic relationship between the parts and the whole.

### *Objects and Maxims—the Visual Evidence*

The fresco was executed in the central room on the *piano nobile* of a private house near the cathedral of Castelfranco. The house belonged to the Martas, before it passed to the Zabbotini, Trevisan and Pellizzari families, but no contemporary documentation has been found regarding the owner or patron at the time the frescoes were painted.<sup>5</sup> The earliest extant attribution to Giorgione was made in 1671 by the local artist and documenter Nadal Melchiori, who stated as follows: "*Nella casa della famiglia Marta evi di sua mano [di Giorgione] nella sala un freggio rappresentante cose naturali, cioè istromenti, libri, et ordegni di tutte le professioni, a chiaroscuro e una testa in particolare finta marmo bellissima*".<sup>6</sup> Most art historians, since the 19th century, have found this attribution acceptable primarily on stylistic grounds.<sup>7</sup> The painting, in the form of a continuous monochrome band, extends along the two upper walls of the oblong room, just below the ceiling beams. The length of these bands is 15.88 meters on the west and 15.74 meters on the east wall, with a height of 0.78 and

<sup>5</sup> My search for documents regarding the house during the period 1490–1510 in the *statistica notariale* (ASV) and the *Libri dei consigli di Castelfranco* (Bibl. Comunale, Castelfranco) yielded no results although members of the Marta family are frequently mentioned.

<sup>6</sup> Nadal Melchiori, "Repertorio di cose appartenenti a Castelfranco nostra patria . . . ecc.," MS. 163, Bibl. Comunale, Castelfranco, V, 43.

<sup>7</sup> The attribution to Giorgione was rejected by Michelangelo Muraro, *Pitture Murali nel Veneto*, Venezia, 1960, 101; Sgarbi, 1978 and Testori, 1978 (as in note 3).

0.76 meters respectively (Figs. 73–79). The parts that originally continued over the windows of the narrow walls are gone. Some sections were detached in the 19th century, including a medallion presently located in the Casa Rostirolla-Piccinini at Castelfranco (Fig. 89). This fragment resembles a *tarocchi* card attributed to Nicoletto da Modena (Fig. 90), which may indicate his involvement in later sections of the east wall and the west wall, where the style becomes more complex with overlapping, spatial effects and increased concern with details.

Despite the minor damage, we can still see an almost uninterrupted series of inanimate objects interspersed with cameo-like portraits and plaques with Latin inscriptions. Beginning on the east wall (Figs. 73–75) and reading from left to right, the fresco begins with a composition of open and closed books, suspended plumes, two pairs of spectacles, a round covered box and an hourglass (Fig. 80). These are arranged above and below a shelf in accordance with a low and sometimes oblique perspective as seen from the right (toward the center of the room). The theme of passing time is already introduced by a suspended plaque bearing the inscription *Umbre transitus est tempus nostrum* (our life is a passing shadow).<sup>8</sup> An oval medallion framing the head of a bearded man in a turban separates this inscription from the next, which reads: *Sola virtus clara aeterna que habetur* (only virtue has eternal glory).<sup>9</sup> Beyond this are more books, a compass, a ruler and some peg-like objects. The series of astronomical depictions that follows includes a celestial sphere with signs of the zodiac, a sextant, an armillary sphere with a banner marked “*Sphaera Mundi*” and five celestial diagrams copied from an incunabulum of the *Sphaera Mundi* by Sacrobosco (Venice, 1488) (Fig. 81).<sup>10</sup> This section also incorporates compasses and a set-square. Two additional inscribed plaques surround an oval medallion showing a bearded man in a popular Renaissance headdress. The first plaque reads: *Qui in suis actibus ratione duce diriguntur iram celi effugere possunt* (he who exercises reason in his acts can repel the wrath of heaven), the second: *Fortuna nemini plus quam*

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Sapienza*, II, 5; *Eccles.*, VI, 12; Petrarch, “*Trionfo del Tempo*,” line 61ff.: “*che più d’un giorno e la vita mortale. Nubil e brev’ e freddo e pien di noia*” and Shakespeare, *Macbeth*: “Life is but a walking shadow.”

<sup>9</sup> Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, I, 4. the word *sola* was added to the original phrase. Between 1470 and the late 1500s 46 editions of his *Opera* were published, most of them in Venice.

<sup>10</sup> The woodcut illustrations first appeared in the 1482 edition and were reused in that of 1488 in Venice. According to the text of the *Sphaera mundi* they depict the lunar and solar eclipses, the eccentricity of the epicycles formed by planetary motions, the division of the sphere according to its substrata and the theory of the orbs of the moon.





Fig. 73. Giorgione, *Fresco of the Casa Marta-Pellizari*, Castelfranco, east wall (1), Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.



Fig. 74. *Fresco of the Casa Marta-Pellizari*, Castelfranco, east wall (2). Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.



Fig. 75. *Fresco of the Casa Marta-Pellizari*, Castelfranco, east wall (3). Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.



Fig. 76. *Fresco of the Casa Marta-Pellizari*, Castelfranco, west wall (1). Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.



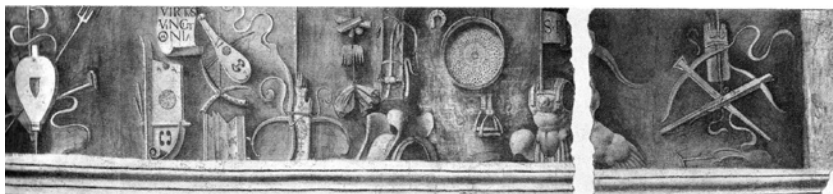


Fig. 77. *Fresco of the Casa Marta-Pellizari, Castelfranco, west wall (2).* Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.

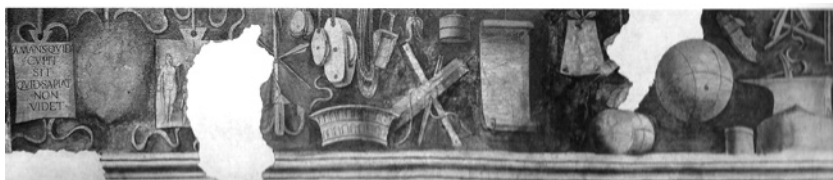


Fig. 78. *Fresco of the Casa Marta-Pellizari, Castelfranco, west wall (3).* Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.



Fig. 79. *Fresco of the Casa Marta-Pellizari, Castelfranco, west wall (4).* Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.



Fig. 80. *East wall (detail),* Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.

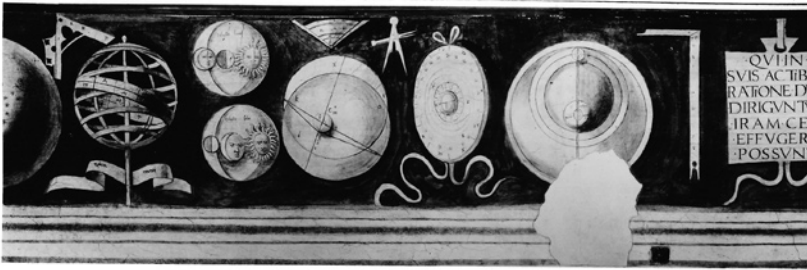


Fig. 81. East wall (detail), Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.

*consilium valet* (wise council is more valuable than Fortune).<sup>11</sup> Four more diagrams from the *Sphaera Mundi* complete the astronomical section. Here the theme changes abruptly to contemporary instruments of war, such as a helmet and halberds, in a *tropheum* composition. In suite once again we see a pair of inscriptions framing an oval portrait medallion. Flanking a partly effaced profile we read: *Fortior qui cupiditatem vincit quam qui hostem subiicit* and *Sepe virtus in hoste laudatur* (Fig. 74).<sup>12</sup> The next *tropheum* composition combines a suspended ribbon ornament with two profile lion masks, crossed swords, leg armor and a string instrument minus its strings (Fig. 82). An entire composition of contemporary musical instruments includes a clavicord, a stringless lute, a *viola da braccio*, bells, a sheath of flutes and a gironde. Only fragments remain of the next two inscriptions, but the detached portrait at Casa Rostirolla-Piccinini probably comes from there. A decorated harp, a tambourine and what may be two flutes complete the musical section. At this point we find a modification of theme and style. Instruments of the painter's studio are portrayed as a still life composition rather than a continuous frieze (Fig. 83). More minute proportions and a consistent rendering of perspective relate this part to the first composition on the same wall. The low viewpoint is adjusted to a spectator standing to the lower left, towards the center of the room. A painting of St. John the Baptist rests on the easel. On a lockable wooden box or table top stand a partly opened decorated box, paint pots with a pen or brush and an open sketchbook with perspective drawings.

<sup>11</sup> The first maxim is still unidentified. The second is a reversal of that of Publius Sirus: "*Fortuna hominibus, plus quam consilium valet,*" from his *Sententiae* that appeared before 1600 under the name of the Pseudo-Seneca.

<sup>12</sup> The first maxim is a variant of "*Fortior qui cupiditates est, quam qui hostes subiicit,*" by Publius Sirus, *Proverbia*. The source of the second is unknown, but a similar theme is found in Cicero, *De Officiis*, I. xii.



Fig. 82. East wall (detail), Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.



Fig. 83. East wall (detail), Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.

A round portrait medallion is on the wall and additional painting utensils are suspended above. The drawing of what may be a female satyr and a child is placed on an easel from which the artist's palette is suspended. Only the first inscription of the next pair survives to warn the spectator to beware of time: "*Si prudens esse cupis in futura prospectum intende*" (If you desire to be prudent look to the future) (Fig. 84). The oval frame contains a Roman style profile with a wreath and the initials A.P. Beyond a plaque that has lost its inscription the artist's studio continues. His tools include a batch of plumes, a cameo and a compass suspended by ribbons, more pots, brushes, a ruler, and two tablets in oblique low point perspective. On the wall are casts or intaglio gems, most of them containing heads in profile. One bears the initials I.S. There is a plaque with a horse and rider and a drawing of linear perspective.

The west wall (Figs. 76 & 77) begins with a *tropheum* composition—a Roman cuirass with a military drum and flutes on one side and halberds on the other, a sheath below and a sword inserted above. The inscription "*Territ omnia tempus*" (Time wears everything away) is framed by a harp, a viola, a bow, a tambourine, bagpipes, flutes, horns, a stingless lute, a book, an inkpot and a scroll. The theme of time is also underscored here by a large clepsydra in the form of an amphora supporting wings and a clock



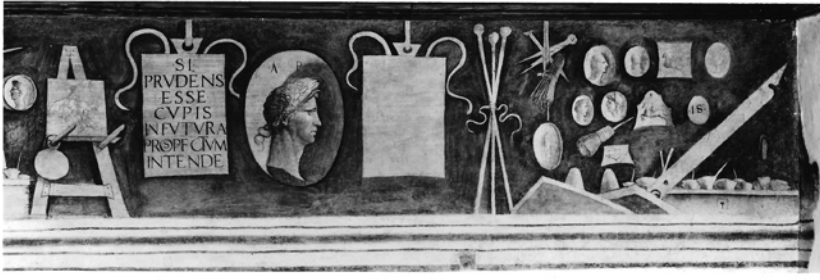


Fig. 84. East wall (detail), Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.

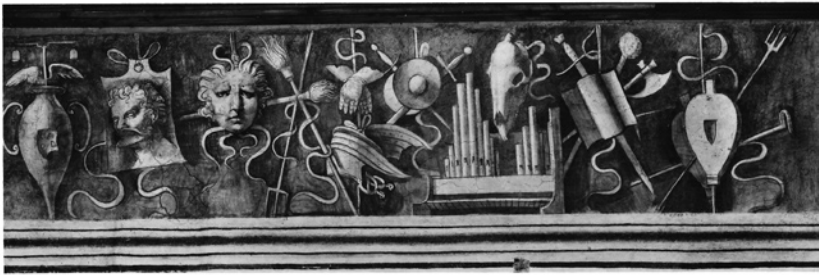


Fig. 85. West wall (detail), Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.

foliot (Fig. 85). The attached *cartellino* is difficult to decipher. A plaque shows the portrait of a man with closed eyes and large lips. Next come a medusa head, flaming torches, a trident, accessories of military armour, swords, spurs, a portable organ with broken pipes, an animal skull, more weapons, bellows, and other smithery tools. A scroll tacked to the wall states: "*Virtus vincit omnia*" ((Virtue conquers all) (Fig. 86). Once again we find stringless string-instruments and horns, with a book of music, bows and a sheath of arrows. Equestrian accessories, such as a saddle, a bridle, a comb, stirrups, a horseshoe and a large sieve are arranged as they would be in a stable. Two Roman cuirasses supporting a banner labeled S.P.Q.R. are followed by crosses bows, a sheath of arrows and spurs. Beyond an effaced section of the fresco is a plaque stating: "*Amans quid cupit sit quid sapiat non videt*",<sup>13</sup> and then the damaged remains of an oval object that is

<sup>13</sup> Publius Sirus, *Sententiae*. The original reads: "*Amans quid cupiat scit, quid sapiat non videt*" meaning: A lover knows what he desires but he does not see what he knows. This may be an unconventional allusion to the idea in Paul, *Romans*, I, 20: For the invisible



Fig. 86. West wall (detail), Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.

pointed at the bottom (Fig. 78). The fragment of the next plaque reveals a nude female holding a bow with a child at her side. The next composition includes a large suspended anchor to which arrows are tied, a basin, a selection of pulleys, ropes, a hook and other implements pertaining to navigation or construction. The large chart is probably that of a navigator. A small blank plaque is suspended next to three spherical objects. Hammers and pincers, anvils and a decorative sheath (of metal?) identify the next composition with blacksmiths or gold and silver smiths (Fig. 78). Animals depicted in the semicircular object probably represent the zodiacal band, but only the lion is visible. A considerable amount of damaged plaster leads us to the inscription *Omnium rerum respicien eus* (or *respiciendus*) (Fig. 79). A plaque bearing another head with closed eyes (a death mask?) and compositions of knives and daggers complete the legible section at the end of the wall.

### *Defining the Frame of Reference*

The first systematic attempt to decipher this iconographic complex was made by Adriano Mariuz in 1966.<sup>14</sup> He related it to the cultural ambience of the Veneto, to scholarly allegories and emblems, like those of the Scholar in his Study, and to the passion for expressing *concetti* through pseudo-hieroglyphic images, exemplified by Horapollo and the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499). Mariuz also identified some of the mottos,

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things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen", which was repeated by Augustine and Petrarch.

<sup>14</sup> Mariuz (as in note 4).

concluding that they represented a contradistinction between two fundamental motifs, caducity and virtue.

In much the same spirit, Teresio Pignatti adopted the idea of "*filosofia per immagini*" of a melancholic and hermetic nature, which derived from the Venetian "philosophers" in what he believed to be Giorgione's circle.<sup>15</sup> He erroneously claimed that Sacrobosco's *Sphaera Mundi* (1488) is the literal source for representations of the Liberal and Mechanical arts and that the "crepuscular melancholy derives from the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*". In fact, only the astronomical diagrams on the left hand side of the east wall derive from the *Sphaera Mundi*. As for the "crepuscular melancholy", neither Pignatti nor Mariuz before him supplied concrete evidence to link the depictions in the frieze to those of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.

Following a suggestion by Pignatti, Maurizio Calvesi designated the work as a manifesto of hermetic thought in direct rapport with Leone Ebreo's *Dialogo d'Amore*.<sup>16</sup> Taken a priori as the key to esoteric meanings, this theory was not founded on direct observation of the images or on methodical iconographic investigation. Astronomical depictions, for example, which occupy about one third of the east wall, were conceived as the key to the whole program while most of the remaining objects were not integrated with the proposed theme. The astronomical diagrams themselves were derived from a practical scientific handbook which offered explanations of a purely technical nature indicating, as most of the other images do, that whatever the philosophic interpretation may be it also involves mundane and practical issues. Attempts such as this to ascribe Giorgione's symbolism to the influence of hermetism have evoked strong criticism from William Melczer, Giorgio Padoan and Augusto Gentili.<sup>17</sup>

Padoan insisted on a methodical approach to factual evidence. This writer's critical analysis of the inscribed maxims illuminated two inter-related issues: 1. errors in the Latin text reveal that the artist (Giorgione?) was not very educated, perhaps even "*senza lettere*"; 2. the maxims were taken from some popular compendium of negligible merit rather than from first hand sources that would probably be used by a more educated man.<sup>18</sup> Assuming the frescoes were by Giorgione, these findings would

<sup>15</sup> Pignatti, 1955 & 1971 (as in note 3).

<sup>16</sup> Calvesi, 1970 (as in note 3), 199–202.

<sup>17</sup> Melczer, 1978; Padoan, 1978 and 1981; Gentili, 1981 (as in note 3). Disproportionate emphasis on astronomical/astrological aspects of the program is seen in the 1987 article by Pastore Stocchi, who also suggested that fatalistic prophesies based on astral phenomena are conveyed by the maxims.

<sup>18</sup> Padoan, 1980 (as in note 3), 425ff.

contradict the assumption, held since Vasari, that the artist was an intellectual and moved in cultured circles.

### *Liberal and Mechanical Arts*

Six out of the seven traditional categories of the Liberal Arts may be identifiable in the fresco. Astronomy is represented by the sextant, the celestial globe, the armillary sphere, compasses and diagrams (Fig. 81). Music is illustrated by a whole selection of instruments and by a book with musical notations (Figs. 82 & 86). The compass, which appears several times, was a common attribute of geometry, but could also represent astronomy, architecture, and intellectual or scientific activity in general. Other objects associated with geometry are the rulers, the set-square, and perhaps even the perspective drawing, but these are not organized into an independent group. Specific symbols of the *trivium* (rhetoric, grammar and logic) are not in evidence, but it is possible that the books designate them as a group in terms of literary disciplines. A lance, arrows, or a sword, were occasionally adopted to symbolize rhetoric, but this identification seems unsuitable where they are combined with so many other weapons. Arithmetic, which is generally associated with some instrument of computation, such as a numerical slate or an abacus, is not represented. We can already conclude from the above that the artist had no interest in displaying a systematic program of the seven liberal arts.

What about the mechanical arts? These could be broadly defined as trades or crafts which involved physical effort and/or technical skills, rather than theoretical knowledge. Examples were depicted in Italian sculpture and painting throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, primarily in programs geared to extol and promote civic pride and achievements.<sup>19</sup> On the west wall three groups of accessories and occupational tools can be associated with known precedents of the *arti mechanicae*. They show horsemanship, navigation and smithery (Figs. 87, 88 & 78) but some of the objects depicted in these three groups have no precedents in the earlier

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<sup>19</sup> E.g. Nicola Pisano's Perugia fountain; frescoes of the Palazzo della Ragione, Padua; Andrea Pisano's reliefs for the Florentine campanile; Nanni di Banco's reliefs at Or San Michele, and the series on the portal of the Basilica di San Marco, Venice. For a discussion of medieval precedents, see Michael Evans, "Allegorical Women and Practical Men: The Iconography of the Arts Reconsidered," in Derek Baker (ed.), *Medieval Women*, Oxford, 1978, 305–29.



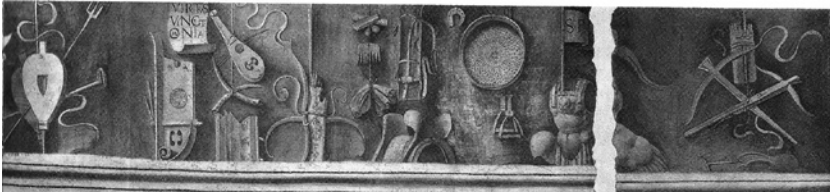


Fig. 87. West wall (detail), Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.

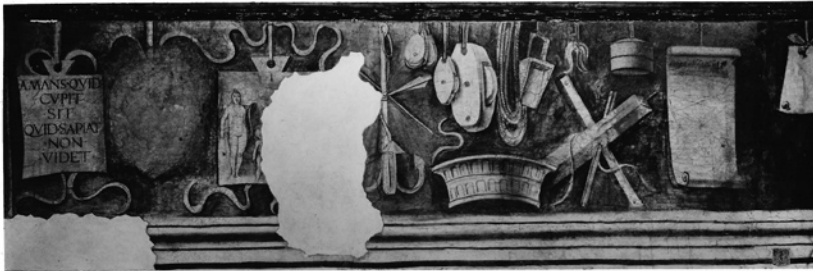


Fig. 88. West wall (detail), Photo Castelfranco Veneto, Biblioteca Comunale.

versions of the *arti mechanicae* and derive, as we shall see, from other contexts.

On the east wall only the painter's occupation may be defined as one of the mechanical arts. As in its fourteenth and fifteenth century precedents, it is presented as a craft with emphasis on practical tools (Figs. 83 & 84).<sup>20</sup> The perspective drawing, however, alludes to the new image of the artist as a man with theoretical training and reflects contemporary attitudes regarding the interrelation between theory and practice in the visual arts. The initial efforts of Leon Battista Alberti, Leonardo and others, in this respect, were carried on in treatises published during the last decade of the *Quattrocento* and the first decade of the *Cinquecento*, at which time the fresco was executed.

We may conclude that, contrary to previous assumptions, no systematic or comprehensive program of the *arti liberali* or *arti mechanicae* can be identified in the fresco. From this point of view, there does not appear

<sup>20</sup> E.g. the painter depicted in the Palazzo della Ragione, Padua and the painter and sculptor of the Florentine campanile. See further examples in Virginia Wylie Egbert, *The Medieval artist at Work*, Princeton, 1967, esp. plates XXIV, XXV & XXVI.

to be any organizational principle to integrate the heterogeneous iconographic elements into a coherent whole.

### *Arms and Armor*

Among the objects that cannot be accounted for in terms of tradition liberal or mechanical art are the arms and armor and various accessories associated with triumphal processions or parades. Trophies, as a form of ornamentation inspired by antique architectural carvings and painted grotesques, were common throughout Italy in the second half of the *Quattrocento*. By the 1470s trophies and war machines were carved on portals at the Ducal Palace in Urbino by a team of sculptors from Lombardy and the Veneto, who subsequently used these motifs in architectural church decoration in and around Venice.<sup>21</sup> By the last decade of the 15th century trophies were depicted on Venetian funerary monuments, both in relief and in fresco. Stylistic parallels have been noted in this context between the frescoes of Castelfranco and those of the tomb of Jacopo Marcello in the Church of the Frari in Venice (ca. 1494–93) and that of Agostino Onigo in the Church of San Niccolò in Treviso (ca. 1490–93).<sup>22</sup> Engravings, inspired by antique prototypes as well as designs by Mantegna, were also instrumental in diffusing the motif in the Veneto.<sup>23</sup>

In his study of the Castelfranco fresco Mariuz interpreted the military imagery as the *vita activa*, complimenting the *vita di pensiero* and reinforced by maxims, such as *Fortior qui cupiditatem vincit* and *Sepe virtus in hoste laudatur*. The portrait medallions were said to represent the *uomini famosi* who exemplified these ideals. Authors have cited similar depictions of trophies on contemporary funerary monuments where, in most cases, the deceased was actually renowned as a military leader or man of action. The most interesting parallel is found in the intarsia decoration of Federigo da Montefeltro's studiolo at Urbino, where the duke's career as a condottiere is represented by his armour, while his intellectual pursuits are portrayed through a whole series of objects, many of which are com-

<sup>21</sup> See Rotondi, 1950/51 & 1969 (as in note 1).

<sup>22</sup> Sgarbi, 1978 (as in note 3).

<sup>23</sup> See Arthur M. Hind, *Early Italian Engravings*, Leichtenstein, 1970, pt. II, vol. VI–VII, esp. plates 500–12, 594–95 by Zoan Andrea and 689–93 by Nicoletto da Modena, Vol. V, 3ff., 61–62 & 107–12 and Ronald Lightbown, *Mantegna*, Oxford, 1986, 234ff.

parable to those at Castelfranco.<sup>24</sup> Even the portraits of *uomini famosi*, which hung above the intarsias, seem to justify the comparison between the Castelfranco program and that of Urbino.

Although the association of these motifs with the ideal of the *vita activa* finds confirmation in both literary and visual sources, their function in the fresco has not been satisfactorily explained. Contrary to most of the other motifs, the arms and armour have been repeated several times throughout the fresco and therefore appear to be a leitmotif of some sort. As such, their meaning in the iconographic program must be reassessed in relation to the maxims as well as to the imagery.

### *The Function of the Maxims*

Several basic themes are repeated by the maxims. The word *Virtus* is repeated in three of them and *Tempus* is repeated twice. *Consilium*, *Ratio* and *Prudentia* are each juxtaposed to some aspect of uncontrollable fate, such as *Fortuna* or *Ira celi*. Some terms are taken from triumphal military contexts, like *vincit*, *hostem subjicit* and *in hoste laudatur*. Such triumphal metaphors, used in the Renaissance to express an allegorical theme, originated with Petrarch's *Trionfi* (ca. 1340–74) and were adopted for every kind of artistic and ceremonial context, in literary, visual and the performing arts.<sup>25</sup> It was noted that each pair of mottos involves a juxtaposition of themes, such as *Tempus* versus *Aeternitas*, *Fortuna* versus *Ratio*, and *Cupiditas* versus *Virtus*. These were summed up by Mariuz in two fundamental themes—the caducity of man and the exaltation of virtue.

Once again we are faced with the question of the relationship of the parts to the whole, and specifically of maxims to images, or of the verbal to the visual. From the thematic point of view, is this a relationship between two distinct yet complimentary elements or of two overlapping parts? The general approach has been to conceive of the images in terms of one theme (e.g. mechanical and liberal arts) and of the mottos as another (e.g. caducity and virtue). According to this conception, there are two different themes that interrelate and compliment each other but nevertheless remain distinct. These assumptions will be contradicted here

<sup>24</sup> Cheles, 1982 (as in note 1), 1–46 and *Lo Studiolo di Urbino*, 1986. Cf. Clough, 1967 (as in note 1), 278–87.

<sup>25</sup> Konrad Eisenbichler & Amilcare A. Janucci (eds.), *Petrarch's Triumphs; Allegory and Spectacle*, Toronto, 1990.

by evidence that clearly indicates an overlapping of verbal and visual thematic content. Let us tentatively summarize the content of the maxims as Virtue contrasted to the concepts of Fate, Fortune and Time.

### *Images of Virtue*

When allegories of virtue became popular in monumental art of the *Trecento*, the medieval traditions of personifications bearing attributes were largely upheld. Rosamund Tuve's study of the virtues and vices demonstrated how symbolic objects, rather than the personifications themselves, came to define complex meanings in the fifteenth century.<sup>26</sup> This visual tradition was diffused in manuscript illumination, architectural sculpture, religious and secular fresco decoration, panel painting and popular art forms, like *cassoni* and *tarocchi*, throughout the *Quattrocento*. When the intarsias of the Urbino Studiolo were created in the 1470s Virtues were represented by objects, and personifications were entirely dispensed with. Still-life was beginning to emerge at that time both as an independent genre and as a form of allegorical depiction. The research done by Luciano Cheles on the iconography of the Urbino Studiolo demonstrates how traditional symbols of Virtues and Arts were creatively adapted to the new framework of allegorical still-life.<sup>27</sup> These objects were illusionistically pictured on shelves in cupboards as if they were actually being used by the duke who might enter at any moment. Symbolic meanings were thus disguised.

The iconography of the Castelfranco fresco similarly employs more than one level of meaning. Each of the objects depicted fulfills a double function; one is overt, the other covert. The objects that most obviously indicate this double meaning are those that appear out of place. Let us take the sieve on the west wall as the first example (Fig. 87). It is uncommon in Renaissance art and I cannot cite any other example where it is figured among practical objects. Here it is seen among equestrian accessories found in the stable, where it was commonly used to separate the seeds from the hay. Considering how deliberate the artist was in selecting objects to adequately express professional activities, the sieve, nevertheless, seems to be a strange choice. The solution lies in its symbolic

<sup>26</sup> Rosamund Tuve, "Notes on the Virtues and Vices," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. XXVI, 1963, 264–303 and XXVII, 1964, 42–72.

<sup>27</sup> Cheles, 1982 & 1986 (as in note 1).



associations. The sieve was a well known symbol of Virtue, specifically associated with Chastity and popularized in Petrarch's *Trionfo della Castità*, in the story of the vestal virgin Tuccia.<sup>28</sup> Tuccia, holding a sieve full of water to prove her innocence after being accused of violating her vow, was familiar in fifteenth and sixteenth century art.<sup>29</sup> The sieve also helped Prudence to separate the Virtues from the Vices. An interesting variant on the theme is found in a manuscript by Leonardo where he explained the antithesis between the oneness of a sieve and the plurality of sand grains that pass through it, with the maxim "I do not fall because I am united".<sup>30</sup> The sieve, whether it is connected to Chastity, Prudence or Fortitude, is consequently a symbol of virtue and is in harmony with other equestrian accessories, like the bridle, the bit and the spurs, which often represent Temperance.<sup>31</sup> The contrasting element in this group is the horseshoe, a talisman representing superstitious belief in fortune as opposed to the true path of virtue.

An anvil and hammers appear as the central motif of the smithery composition toward the end of the west wall (Fig. 78). This motif was used twice by Andrea Pisano in the hexagons of the Florentine campanile, once to represent the smithery profession, the second time as an attribute of Tubal Cain. The latter became the exponent of music in *Trecento* art due to the confusion of Tuval with Yuval, who was designated to this honor in the Bible,<sup>32</sup> but since music has been adequately represented in the fresco and there are other smithery tools to complete the picture of the workshop, the reference here is obvious. The primary significance of the anvil and hammer motif, however, does not derive from its professional associations. The anvil and hammer were images of Fortitude, Courage and Patience. In 16th and 17th century emblem books its

<sup>28</sup> *Trionfo della Castità*, 222–26 in the *Trionfi*. The story was told by Valerius Maximus, VIII; Pliny, *Hist. nat.*, XXVIII, 12 and St. Augustine, *Civ. dei* X, 16. For the later Renaissance development of this iconography, see Francis Yates, "The Triumph of Chastity," in *Astrea, The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century*, London & Boston, 1975, 112–20.

<sup>29</sup> E.g. Jacopo del Sellaio's *Trionfo della Castità*, Fiesole, Museo Bandini; Nicoletto da Modena's engraving of Tuccia after Dürer (Hind, 1970, VI–VII, pl. 687) and the well known version by Mantegna: Lightbown, 1986, (as in note 23), fig. 144.

<sup>30</sup> MS. H 130v, Paris, Institut de France, 1493–4.

<sup>31</sup> Lynn White Jr., "The Iconography of Temperantia and the Virtuousness of Technology," in Theodore K. Rabb & Jerrold E. Seigel (eds.), *Action and Conviction in Early Modern Europe*, Princeton, 1969, 197–219.

<sup>32</sup> *Genesis*, 4, 21–22.

connotations included the concepts of Constancy and Invincibility.<sup>33</sup> These ideas of strength and stability are contrasted in the fresco to the volatility of Fortune, whose attributes are the round balls found to the left, and to astral predictions of fate, alluded to by the zodiacal arc on the right.

The most unlikely objects in the fresco are probably the pulleys, ropes and hooks depicted on the west wall. They belong, together with the anchor and chart, to the field of navigation. Mechanisms of a similar type, including revolving wheels and ropes, were depicted along with portrayals of ships as still-life reliefs on the façade of the Ducal Palace in Urbino.<sup>34</sup> Anchors and pulleys are actually weights attached to ropes. Objects of this kind are used in emblematic art to convey the idea of overcoming some obstacle through virtue. The anchor, with or without a ship, was one of the most popular attributes of Hope in art of the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. *Spes*, interpreted as the idea of maintaining hope in the face of misfortune, was allegorically linked to images of the sea, ships in storms and just plain anchors.<sup>35</sup> Here, as in the anvil, ball and zodiac composition, the juxtaposition of Virtue and Fortune is presented by contrasting images. We may therefore conclude that a pattern of representation is identifiable on the west wall. Now that we have the key, the rest of the objects will fall into their logical places.

### *Images of Time*

Musical instruments are found on both walls in large numbers and, like the arms and armor, appear to represent a leitmotif in the entire fresco. Musical instruments were well known symbols of harmony, especially cosmic harmony, but additional aspects are interposed here. Salient anomalies are found in the string instruments that lack their strings and the organ that has lost its pipes, both indicating temporal corruption. The vase shaped clepsydra adjoining the instruments on the west wall introduces the theme of time as a finite and destructive dimension of existence (Fig. 76 & 85). Vases used for ashes of the defunct were carved on Roman stele,

<sup>33</sup> See Arthur Henkel and Albrecht Schöne, *Emblemata*, Stuttgart, 1978, e.g. 93–94, 1283 & 1409.

<sup>34</sup> Reproduced in Rotondi, 1969 (as in note 1), figs. 83–86.

<sup>35</sup> E.g. George F. Hill and Graham Pollard, *Renaissance Medals*, London, 1967, no. 110 and Henkel and Schöne (as in note 33), 1415, 1462 & 1472.

where they alluded to eschatological beliefs, and were thus taken over by Christianity. But the vase-clepsydra depicted here adopts the funerary context to express human transience and anticipates the motif as a *vanitas* symbol in the seventeenth century. Wings also denote time's volatility. The clock foliot was first introduced as a symbol of Time in illustrations of Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo* dating from the 1480s, where it was generally accompanied by symbols of temporal destruction (e.g. Fig. 60).<sup>36</sup> In this context the maxim *Territ omnia tempus*, placed among the instruments, is simply a restatement of the visual message.

How does the temporal allegory relate to the overall theme of the fresco? The mechanical clock, here represented by its foliot, was a popular attribute of Temperance and, as such, had gradually replaced the hourglass, primarily in manuscript illuminations of the fourteenth century. The hourglass itself had originally been an attribute of death and, even when it passed into the hands of Temperance, still bore the connotation that Death was just around the corner. In the Castelfranco fresco an hourglass depicted on the east wall is adjacent to the maxim *Umbre transitus est tempus nostrum* (Fig. 80). We must consequently differentiate between two kinds of temporal symbols in the fresco, one that conveys transience and corruption, the other allied to the concept of virtuousness. The clock, or clock foliot, had become an ideal image of Temperance, or even Prudence, because it gave visual expression to the concept of regularity. The regulation of time as a measurable but continuous phenomenon was analogous to human self-discipline and perseverance. It also illustrated a constant principle underlying apparent cosmic flux, a symbol of divine and, by reflection, of human wisdom.

Whoever conceived of the clepsydra-wing-foliot motif was, in fact, propounding a moral message through a sophisticated interplay of temporal symbols. The more obvious message of transience is echoed in the maxim *Territ omnia tempus*, but there is a more subtle idea conveyed by the double meaning contained in each of the objects, including the double wing motif, which is a symbol of Time and also of the spirit. The combined image is meant to communicate the precept that spiritual virtue

<sup>36</sup> See chapter 6. The foliot motif was also used by Ambrogio Barocci in the frieze decoration of the Ducal Palace in Urbino, for example, in the *Cappella del Perdono*: see Rotondi, 1969 (as in note 1) figs. 229–32. This work was attributed to the mid or late 1470s but, in my opinion, should be dated closer to the expulsion of the Montefeltri by Cesare Borgia in 1502.

triumphs over temporal transience.<sup>37</sup> The same idea is succinctly stated in the maxim *Virtus vincit omnia*.

A final observation in regard to the musical complex will illustrate the consistency of the allegorical pattern. Different types of musical instruments have been portrayed, representing higher as opposed to lower culture or spirituality as opposed to sensuality. The one instrument that is typically associated with the sensual passions in Renaissance art is the bagpipe, which fulfills the same iconographic function here as the horse-shoe in the equestrian complex or the round balls in the smithery group. The combination of temporal and musical symbols conveys the message that fluctuations of time and passion are overcome by virtue which attains to a superior harmony attune to that of the universe.

### *Contrasts of Virtues and Vices*

Interspersed between the musical instruments and symbols of time and death we find the trophies and accessories of the warrior. Beyond their association with the *vita activa*, already referred to, is another allusion to virtue. Renaissance artists were well aware that weapons were depicted in Roman art as symbols of virtue.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the allegory of militant Virtue attired in armor had been familiar to medieval artists, who had created Virtues and Vices with shields, swords, lances and daggers in *Psychomachia* allegories. When the Renaissance reunited classical form and content, military weapons and paraphernalia were naturally allied to the Roman concept of *Virtus* and, by reflection, to the Christian interpretation of the term that, as we will see, is not the same. The militant goddess Athena-Minerva, who personified wisdom and virtue in Renaissance art, normally had a helmet, a lance and body armor decorated with a medusa

<sup>37</sup> For the continued use of the clepsydra-foliot motif as a symbol of virtue, see Vasari's painting of *Pazienza* (1551) (Fig. 129) and the medal of Ercole d'Este with the motto *Omnis fortuna superanda*—(Virtue) overcomes all turns of Fortune: Rudolph Wittkower, "Patience and Chance; the Story of a Political Emblem," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, I, 1937/38, 171–77; Liana de Girolami Cheney, *The Homes of Giorgio Vasari*, New York, 2006, 231 and *Giorgio Vasari's Teachers: Sacred and Profane Art*, New York, 2007, 169–72. These are discussed below in Chapter Nine. In the 17th century the clepsydra-wing-foliot motif was adopted for the *Vanitas* still-life; see *Les Vanités dans la peinture du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, cat. d'exposition, Caen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1990, 60, figs. 6 & 7.

<sup>38</sup> A copy of a Roman coin showing the parazonium as an attribute of *virtus*, for example, was painted on the ceiling of the Camerino Farnese by Annibale Caracci; see J.R. Martin, *The Farnese Gallery*, Princeton, 1965, 24 & pl. 9.



head, like the one depicted beside the armor in the fresco. Armed Christian virtues, such as *Fortitudo* and *Justitia*, were commonly depicted on sepulchral monuments to indicate the ethical character of the deceased even before trophies came into fashion and long afterwards. In view of this well established tradition and the moralizing content of the program as a whole, we can unequivocally identify the arms and armor dispersed throughout the fresco with the concept of Virtue.

The key to the disguised symbolism on the first half of the east wall (Fig. 73) lies less in the images themselves and more in the definitive role of the inscriptions. In the first composition, spectacles allude to Temperance and the hourglass signifies transience and death, both meanings confirmed by the adjacent inscriptions. Instruments of measurement, such as the compasses and rulers that follow, were familiar attributes of Temperance, Prudence and Reason. They too are explained by the maxims which state that *Ratio* and *Consilium* can counteract the effects of *Ira Celi* (fate) and *Fortuna*.

As we move to the center of the east wall (Fig. 74), despite a change of style, we find the same play on contrasting ideas that typifies the west wall. The double lion-mask motif and the duplication of masks, swords and leg-armor suggest a theme involving two aspects. Masks, which indicate a negative theme, like duplicity or the two faces of Fortune, are thus juxtaposed with the duplicated trophies of Virtue. The duality is echoed in the ambivalence of the maxims regarding the enemy.

How does the composition of the painter's studio function as an allegory of Virtue? The maxim—*Si prudens esse cupis in futura prospectum intende*—provides the key (Fig. 84). The concept of Prudence is defined by the expression *futura prospicere* (to look to the future or distance), which also alludes to the practice of perspective that is illustrated by the perspective drawing to the left.

The classical cameo portrait, marked by the initials A.P., represents the Greek painter Apelles (Fig. 84). Lucian's *ekphrasis* of his *Calumnia* allegory, where an innocent youth is victimized by allegories of Vices, was popularized in the Renaissance when Alberti recommended the theme for painters.<sup>39</sup> In the version by Botticelli (ca. 1495), architectural reliefs

<sup>39</sup> Lucian, *Calumnia*, 5; L.B. Alberti, *De pictura*, Basel, 1540, 102 ff., edited by C. Grayson, 1972. the same theme was drawn by Mantegna and then engraved by Mocetto (Fig. 101). In 1522 a drawing was made by Dürer that was subsequently executed by Geoge Pencz and others for the city hall of Nuremberg. For a comprehensive study and numerous illustrations of this theme in the Renaissance, see Sara Agnoletti, "La Calunnia di Apelle:

of centaurs and satyrs are depicted in scenes of violence and passion. In the fresco, the drawing of a female satyr and child supported on an easel (Fig. 83) may have been inspired by similar details in Botticelli's painting. The moral must have been repeated in the maxim to the right of Apelles.

A third picture in this iconographic group depicts John the Baptist carrying a cross and gesturing in the conventional attitude of *Ecce Agnus Dei* (Fig. 83). On the overt level this entire group represents the painter's profession in both its practical and theoretical aspects. The allegorical allusion to virtue and vice, however, is presented in the guise of conventional iconographic themes. Both the classical *Calumnia* by Apelles and the Christian *Agnus Dei* deal with tragedy caused by vice and ignorance. Between them is a symbolic reiteration of the moralization—to look to the future or to have perspective.

Among the plaster casts, paint pots and tools of measurement that complete the artist's studio, the initials IS are prominently displayed (Fig. 84). They are probably an allusion to the Greek painter Zeuxis, whose fame in the Renaissance was largely due to Alberti's praise of his methods. He was said to have extracted an ideal image of feminine beauty by copying many subjects and selecting what was optimal in each.<sup>40</sup> Alberti's tale of Zeuxis conveyed his conception of the artistic process, not as mere technical craftsmanship, but as creative intervention. Perhaps the story also represented the concept of the ideal human form, portrayed by the artist, as a symbol of human virtue.

#### Virtutis laus omnis in actione consistit

The Castelfranco fresco presents a consistent, didactic program that would have been clearly legible to any contemporary who had received a humanistic education. It sets forth ideals and values that were expressed in theoretical writings and had already produced a revolution in educa-

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recupero e riconversione ecfrastica del trattetello di Luciano in Occidente," *La Rivista di engramma*, 42, luglio-agosto 2005, Online: [http://www.engramma.it/engramma\\_v4/rivista/saggio/42/42\\_saggiogalleria.html](http://www.engramma.it/engramma_v4/rivista/saggio/42/42_saggiogalleria.html). See a later discussion of Apelles as a representative of wisdom by Girolamo Cardanus (1501–76) "*De sapientia*", 503. col. 1–2, in his *Opera Omnia*, X, Lyon, 1963.

<sup>40</sup> Alberti, *De pictura*, 1435, 55 & 56. The story was taken from Cicero and Pliny the Elder.

tional practice. In order to justify these statements, I would like to review the salient themes and to elucidate their sources.

By interpreting the double meaning conveyed by each of the images, leitmotifs have been identified, which are also reiterated in the maxims. The theme of wisdom is represented by objects of learning and knowledge. The second theme underlying the entire program is that of virtue, which is symbolically represented by arms and armor and by many objects associated in Renaissance art with moral values, such as Prudence, Fortitude, Courage, Patience, Temperance and Reason. Juxtaposed with these are vices, with emphasis on sensual passions (the bagpipe and satyr) and the fallbleness of human character that causes men to submit to the control of Time (the hourglass, clepsydra, foliot), Fate (the zodiac) and Fortune (the round balls and horseshoe).

A distinction should be made between two different concepts of virtue conveyed in the fresco. The Christian concept of moral virtue is spiritual and theocentric; the classical *virtus* is basically pragmatic and homocentric.<sup>41</sup> The moralizing content of the fresco is a synthesis of both. For Renaissance humanists, however, *virtus* meant primarily personal achievement, associated with excellence attained in a profession or art, which ultimately brought fame and glory. They used it, as their Roman mentors had, to define creative ability as well as its practical application or realization. By the mid *Quattrocento* humanist educators were prescribing a well defined classical curriculum and specific techniques for those who aspired to virtuousness. The iconographic of the Castelfranco fresco is a product and expression of these developments.

Two theoretical issues, which were pivotal for humanist debates on learning and wisdom, are elaborated in the fresco. The first pertains to the relative merits of active and contemplative lives, the second to the question of whether wisdom is an intellectual or moral virtue.<sup>42</sup> Most writers, from Petrarch to Erasmus and long after, conceived of wisdom as ethical rather than metaphysical and active rather than contemplative.<sup>43</sup> Wisdom was not passive knowledge but rather virtuous action. The ideal of practical action and that of ethics are conveyed in the fresco by the very same objects. Arms, for example, represent *vita activa* and concurrently symbolize moral virtue, as if to say virtue lies in action. In fact, that's precisely

<sup>41</sup> See Werner Eisenhut, *Virtus Romana*, Munich, 1973.

<sup>42</sup> Eugene F. Rice, *The Renaissance Idea of Wisdom*, Cambridge, Mass., 1958, chap. 2, 30ff.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, esp. 35–57 and chap. 6, 149ff.

what Cicero said in the phrase *virtutis laus omnis in actione consistit* (The Whole Glory of Virtue is in Activity), which was repeatedly quoted by the theorists and practitioners of the new humanist education.<sup>44</sup>

The breakthrough in educational practice that accompanied these debates took place not in Florence, where Neoplatonism was still dominant, but in northern Italy. Towards the mid *Quattrocento* the famous humanist educators Gasparino Barzizza, Guarino Guarini and Vittorino da Feltre were active in the Veneto, primarily in Padua, Venice, Verona and Mantua. These were the pioneering founders of schools for the sons, and some daughters, of ruling nobles and wealthy citizens and thus influenced a whole generation of humanist leaders in civic, ecclesiastical and intellectual spheres.<sup>45</sup> One of Vittorino's pupils was Ognibene Bonisolo da Lonigo, who taught near Castelfranco, at Treviso, between 1440 and 1443, both as an independent and as a communal master. He was instrumental as a translator and commentator in introducing into the classroom the texts of Sallust, Valerius Maximus, and others whose maxims were chosen for the Castelfranco fresco a generation later. Another humanist teacher, hired by the Commune of Treviso between 1444 and 1449, was Filippo da Reggio who taught children grammar, and lectured publically on poetry, rhetoric and oratory.<sup>46</sup> The activities of these teachers as well as official communal documents attest to the presence of the *studia humanitatis* in the Commune of Treviso, to which Castelfranco belonged. The new curriculum advocated by the humanist educators combined traditional liberal art studies with new subjects, such as training in arms, elementary mechanics, perspective drawing and horsemanship. We have noted that these subjects, which were not previously combined with a liberal arts program, are depicted in the fresco alongside more intellectual pursuits. Training of both mind and body were considered prerequisites for any kind of service to the community, for statesmanship and administration, for public and private business, and even for an intellectual career. There can be no doubt that the activities selected, with marked emphasis on

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<sup>44</sup> Cicero, *De officiis*, 1, 5, 19. This was quoted by Vittorino da Feltre, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini and others. For pedagogical texts, see W.H. Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators*, New York, (1970) 1996.

<sup>45</sup> See Paul H. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, Baltimore & London, 1989, esp. chap. 1, 29–33, and chap. V, 125–41; Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought*, Oxford & New York, 1996; Robert Black, "Italian Renaissance Education: Changing Perspectives and Continuing Controversies," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 52, No. 2, Apr.–Jun., 1991, 315–34; Charles G. Nauert, *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe*, Cambridge, 2nd edit., 2006, esp. 12–24.

<sup>46</sup> Grendler (as above), 14, 133–35, 138.

practical as opposed to speculative or active as opposed to contemplative pursuits, reflect the attitudes of humanist education and the Ciceronian concepts that provided their inspiration and authority.<sup>47</sup>

A significant aspect of the new teaching, the use of maxims as part of its didactic methods, provides another link to our fresco. Humanist teachers were of the opinion that copying classical maxims (i.e. moral sayings) and learning them by heart was the most effective way to improve moral character. This involved the use of phrase books or compendiums, like the *Facta et dicta memorabilia* of Valerius Maximus and the *Sententiae* of Publius Sirus, and the selection of proverbs from Sallust and other Roman authors on ethics.<sup>48</sup> Additional aids to the same end were provided by historical anecdotes, biographies or classical tales of virtue and vice. The *Calumnia of Apelles* used by the Castelfranco artist is a typical example.<sup>49</sup>

We may summarize the function of time and temporality in the Castelfranco fresco by emphasizing two aspects. Fluctuations of time and passion are overcome by virtue. In this context the idea of temporality still bears the negative moral connotations of medieval speculation. The connection between practical action and ethical values, on the other hand, indirectly postulates the existence of a positive time dimension. The revived concept of propitious time, and emphasis on its practical utilization in the undertakings of *vita activa*, represent a turning point discernable from the mid to late *Quattrocento*. In the next chapter, we will see how the concept of *kairos* gains prominence in Renaissance secular theory.

<sup>47</sup> Regarding the new curriculum, see P.P. Vergerius, *De ingenuis Moribus*, Venezia, 1470 or 1472; Eng. trans. in Woodward (as in note 44), 102ff.; Eugin Garin, *Il pensiero pedagogico dell'umanesimo*, Firenze, 1958, 504–718; Nella Giannetto (ed.), *Vittorino da Feltre e la sua scuola: umanesimo, pedagogia, arti*, Firenze, 1981; Bartolomeo Platina, *Vita di Vittorino da Feltre*, Padova, 1948; W.H. Woodward, *Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance 1400–1600*, New York, 1967 and Grendler (as in note 45), esp. chaps. II & III, 111–329.

<sup>48</sup> Regarding Sallust and Publius Sirus, see notes 8, 10 & 11. *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, (Venezia, 1471) appeared in 38 editions before 1600, most of them in Venice and some with commentaries, like that of Ognibene da Lonigo (Venezia, 1482). Regarding the method of memorizing sentences, see e.g. Battista Guarini, *De ordine docendi et discendi* (1459), in Grendler (as in note 45), 194–97, 203, and regarding *exempla*: François Rigolot, “The Renaissance Crisis of Exemplarity,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 59, No. 4, Oct., 1998, 557–563.

<sup>49</sup> In the original version of this study, I suggested that two different artists executed the fresco. Based on stylistic characteristics, it appears to me that Giorgione painted half of the east wall in about 1495, at the beginning of his career. The second artist, who seems to have continued the work after Giorgione's departure, is related to the engraver and painter Nicoletto da Modena. See my discussion in: S. Cohen, “Virtuousness and Wisdom in the Giorgionesque Fresco of Castelfranco,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Juillet–Août, 1996, 1–20, esp. 16–17.





Fig. 89. *Portrait of an Emperor*, fragment detached from the east wall. Castelfranco, Casa Rostirolla-Piccinini.



Fig. 90. Nicoletto da Modena (attrib.), Caesar, card from a tarocchi pack, engraving.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### *KAIROS/OCCASIO*—VICISSITUDES OF PROPITIOUS TIME FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE RENAISSANCE

It is remarkable that the image of *Kairos* (L. *Occasio*), opportune time or the propitious moment, never fell into the oblivion that obscured other classical personifications of time-concepts in the literature and art of the Middle Ages. The theoretical concept of irreversible time, its ephemerality and volatility, and the flight of the expedient or decisive moment, had crystallized in antiquity into the personified image of *Kairos*. Its message, however, was not evanescent and elusive, for it conveyed the idea that one could grasp the expedient moment and thus counteract the ruinous course of time. A decisive impetus in promoting the transition of *Kairos* from antiquity was the facility of adapting its allegorical imagery to Christian moralization and didactic iconography. By the early Renaissance humanists had resuscitated the literary sources that described and interpreted the classical image, and by the sixteenth century the personification of *Kairos*, restored in its authentic Greco-Roman form with accumulated moralistic appendages, was restructured into contemporary contexts with humanistic, political and moral implications.

#### *Lysippos and the Classical Literary Tradition*

The famous bronze statue of *Kairos* (ca. 350 B.C.), now lost, was created by the sculptor Lysippos and placed near the Agora of Sikyon.<sup>1</sup> A later epigram by Posidippos (3rd c. B.C.), set forth as a dialogue between a spectator and the statue, was said to be carved on the statue's base:

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<sup>1</sup> According to Pausanias (2nd c. A.D.), an altar of *Kairos*, described in mythology as the youngest divine child of Zeus, was located near the stadium at Olympia beside that of Hermes of the Games, *Periegesis* (*Guide to Greece*, V.14.9). It has been suggested that the statue was related to the agōn—the athletic contests or Olympic games; see Debra Hawhee, *Bodily Arts: Rhetoric and Athletics in Ancient Greece*, Austin, 2005, 65–78. For other interpretations of the statue and epigrams, and literature regarding *Kairos*, see Évelyne Prioux, *Regards Alexandrins*, Leuven, 2007, 214–224, 240–43.

Who and whence was the sculptor? From Sikyon. And his name? Lysippos. And who are you? Time who subdues all things. Why do you stand on tip toe? I am ever running. And why have you a pair of wings on your feet? I fly with the wind. And why do you hold a razor in your right hand? As a sign to men that I am sharper than any sharp edge. And why does your hair hang over your face? For him who meets me to take me by the forelock. And why, in heaven's name, is the back of your head bald? Because none of whom I have once raced by on my winged feet will now, though he wishes it sore, take hold of me from behind. Why did the artist fashion you? For your sake, stranger, and he set me up in the porch as a lesson.<sup>2</sup>

The Greek and Latin literary tradition of *Kairos/Occasio* continually emphasized and expounded the moralistic connotations of the prosopopaic image.<sup>3</sup> Although it has been suggested that the allegorical meanings described by Posidippos were not intended by the sculptor, who was famous as a sculptor of athletes,<sup>4</sup> modern authors have generally accepted the allegorical interpretation.<sup>5</sup> Copies in marble, interpretive descriptions and eulogies seem to have proliferated from the time of Lysippos. About 700 years later, in the 4th c. A.D. the Greek rhetorician Callistratus was still emphasizing the temporal metaphors and didactic message set forth by Posidippos, as represented in the following passage:

The wings on his feet, he told us, suggested his swiftness, and that, borne by the seasons, he goes rolling on through all eternity; and as to his youthful beauty, that beauty is always opportune and that Kairos is the only artificer of beauty, whereas that of which the beauty has withered has no part in the nature of Kairos; he also explained that the lock of hair on his forehead indicated that while he is easy to catch as he approaches, yet, when he has passed by, the moment of action has likewise expired, and that, if Kairos is neglected, it cannot be recovered."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Translation by W.R. Paton, *Love Epigrams*, Loeb Classical Library, London, 1898. For the Greek text, see J.E. Matzke, "On the Souce of the Italian and English Idioms Meaning 'to Take Time by the forelock', with special Reference to Bojardo's *Orlando Innamorato*, Book II, Cantos VII–IX, *PMLA*," Vol. 8, no. 3, 1893, 303–334, esp. 314.

<sup>3</sup> See Prioux (as in note 1), 240–43 and Silvia Matiaci, "Da Kairos a Occasio: un percorso tra letteratura e iconografia," in *Il Calamo della Memoria* IV, 2011, 127–154.

<sup>4</sup> A.B. Cook, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion*, (London, 1914), New York, 1965, vol. II, Appendix A: Kairos, 859–68.

<sup>5</sup> Jerome Jordan Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, Cambridge, 1986, 54, suggested the statue was "a personal artistic credo" of the artist expressing the idea that "art dealt with temporal and ephemeral things".

<sup>6</sup> *Descriptions* 6, translation by Arthur Fairbanks, *Elder Philostratus, Younger Philostratus, Callistratus*, Loeb Classical Library, vol. 256, London, 1931. See Greek text of Callistratus, in Matzke (as in note 2), 312–14.

The Hellenistic concept of *Kairos* was also applied in legal, political and rhetorical contexts, associated with assessment of the appropriate time, place and situation for an expedient course of action. In the context of rhetorical decorum, Aristotle had defined *Kairos* as the opportune time and appropriate situation. In his *Panathenaicus* the Greek rhetorician Isocrates (4th c. B.C.E.) wrote that educated people are those “who manage well the circumstances which they encounter day by day, and who possess a judgment which is accurate in meeting occasions as they arise and rarely miss the expedient course of action.”<sup>7</sup>

We shall see that many of these associations were conveyed by literary tradition and were relevant to the Renaissance revival of *Kairos*, as adopted in humanistic theory, political ideology and allegorical iconography.

### *Medieval Mediators*

How were these conceptions of *Kairos* mediated in the Middle Ages? Both literary and visual sources testify to the continued preoccupation with the image of *Kairos* and its allegorical implications in Latin and Greek traditions. The *Anthologia Graeca* preserved the original epigram by Posidippos that had supposedly been inscribed on the base of the Lyssipan statue and influenced allegories of *Kairos* by Phaedrus (1st c.), Ausonius (4th c.) and later authors.<sup>8</sup> The epigram was transmitted in the compilation of the monk Maximus Planudes (early 14th c.) and was first printed in Florence by Janus Lascaris in 1494.<sup>9</sup> A variant of the *Anthologia* text, still preserving the dialogue form, explicated the *Occasionem* woodcut in the earliest issue of Alciati's *Emblemata* (Augsburg, 1531), and all subsequent versions thereof:

<sup>7</sup> Translated by George Norlin, *Isocrates*, 3 vols., London, 1980. See P. Sipiora & J.S. Baumlín, *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory and Praxis*, Albany, 2002 and Ellen Papakiriakou/Anagnostou, online: [http://www.sikyon.com/sikyon/lysippos/lysip\\_eggpg07/html](http://www.sikyon.com/sikyon/lysippos/lysip_eggpg07/html).

<sup>8</sup> See P.R.H. Green, *Decimi Magni Ausonii Opera*, Oxonii, 1999; N.M. Kay, *Ausonius Epigrams*, Text with Introduction and Commentary, London, 2001; Cook (as in note 4), 859; Matiaci (as in note 3), 130–33.

<sup>9</sup> *Anth. Pal.*, 10. 52. i: *Epigrammata Anthologia Palatina*, Its *editio princeps*, based on the version transmitted by the Greek monk, Maximus Planudes (ca. 1300/1320), was issued in 1494 by Janus Lascaris with the printer Laurentius Francisci de Alopa in Florence, and was soon followed by Aldus in Venice (1494, 1521), Giunti in Florence (1519) and publishers in Paris (1532, 1556), Basle (1554) and elsewhere. See Maximus Planudes, edited by Hugo Grotius & Friedrich Dubner, Paris, 1849, 1923, 2010 (reproduction of 1923 edition).

This image is the work of Lysippus, whose home was Sicyon.—Who are you?—I am the moment of seized opportunity that governs all.—Why do you stand on points?—I am always a leader.—Why do you have winged sandals on your feet?—The fickle breeze bears me in all directions.—Tell us, what is the reason for the sharp razor in your right hand?—This sign indicates that I am keener than any cutting edge.—Why is there a lock of hair on your brow?—So that I may be seized as I run towards you.—But come, tell us now, why ever is the back of your head bald?—So that if any person once lets me depart on my winged feet, I may not thereafter be caught by having my hair seized. It was for your sake, stranger, that the craftsman produced me with such art, and, so that I should warn all, it is an open portico that holds me.<sup>10</sup>

In his *Epigrammata Liber*, Ausonius (4th c. A.D.) had described an image of *Occasio* and *Metanoia* (*Poenitentia*), which he attributed to the Greek Sculptor Phidias.<sup>11</sup> In a dialogue patterned after that of Posidippos *Occasio* claims “*Sum dea quae rara et paucis Occasio nota*” (verse 3), and *Metanoia* rejoins “*Sum dea quae facti non factique exigo poenas, nempe ut paeniteat: sic Metanoëa vocat*” (verse 12), both appearing as feminine personifications. The epigram also contains an interesting comment: “*Sum dea, cui nomen nec Cicero ipse dedit*” (i.e. *Metanoia*), which may refer not only to Cicero’s *De natura deorum* (*On the Nature of the Gods*) but also to his *De inventione*, where he discusses aspects of rhetorical time, stating “*Occasio est pars temporis*”.<sup>12</sup> Visual depictions of the *Metanoia/Poenitentia* per-

<sup>10</sup> *Lysippi hoc opus est, Sycion cui patria, tu quis? / Cuncta domans capti temporis articulus Cur pinnis stas, usque rector, talaria plantis / Cur retines? passim me levis aura rapit In dextra est tenuis dic unde novacula? Acutum / Omni acie hoc signum me magis esse docet Cur in fronte coma occurrens ut prender, at heus tu/ Dic cur pars calva est posterior capitis Me semel alipedem si quis permat abire. / Ne possim apprenso crine deinde rapi Tali opifex nos arte tui causa aedidit hospes/ Utque omnes moneam, pergula aperta tenet.* (Alciati, *Emblemata*, Augsburg, 1531, A8v).

<sup>11</sup> “IN SIMVLACRVM OCCASIONIS ET POENITENTIAE

*Cuius opus? Phidiae, qui signum Pallados, eius, quique Iovem fecit, tertia palma ego sum. Sum dea quae rara et paucis Occasio nota. Quid rotulae insistis? Stare loco nequeo. Quid talaria habes? Volucris sum. Mercurius quae fortunare solet, tardo ego, cum volui. Crine tegis faciem? Cognosci nolo. Sed heus tu occipiti calvo es? Ne teneat fugiens. Quae tibi iuncta comes? Dicat tibi. Dic rogo quae sis. Sum dea, cui nomen nec Cicero ipse dedit. Sum dea, quae facti non factique exigo poenas, nempe ut paeniteat: sic Metanoëa vocor. Tu modo dic, quid agat tecum. Quandoque volavi, haec manet: hanc retinent quos ego praeterii. Tu quoque dum rogitas, dum percontando moraris, elapsam dices me tibi de manibus.”* (Ausonius, *Epigrammata liber*, ep. 33).

<sup>12</sup> Cicero (106 B.C.–43 B.C.), *De inventione*, XXVII: “An occasion is a portion of time having in it a suitable opportunity for doing or avoiding to do some particular thing. Wherefore there is this difference between it and time. For, as to genus, indeed, they are both understood to be identical; but in time some space is expressed in some manner or other, which is regarded with reference to years, or to a year, or to some portion of a year; but in



sonification have not been identified in classical art, but her existence in moral allegory was attested by Lucian's *ekphrasis* of the *Calumnia of Apelles* (2nd C.); there she appeared as a woman dressed in mourning, crying as she turned back to view the personification of Truth.<sup>13</sup>

In the poem *O Fortuna* of the *Carmina Burana* the familiar Latin phrasing is repeated: *verum est quod legitur, fronte capillata, sed plerumque sequitur calvata* (It is true what is read that she [*Occasio*] has the forehead with hair, but that most often she passes by bald). Although the extant manuscript of the *Carmina Burana* (Songs from Beuern) was written about 1230, its 254 poems derive largely from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>14</sup> The Goliard verses on *Occasio* and *Fortuna* satirized life's mutability, and stressing the *carpe diem* motif the poet exclaimed: "*sors salutis et virtutis mihi nunc contraria est affectus et defectus semper in angaria. Hac in hora sine mora corde pulsum tangite; quod per sortem sternit fortem. Mecum omnes plangite*" (Thou dost withdraw my health and virtue; thou dost threaten my emotion and weakness with torture. At this hour therefore, let us pluck the strings without delay. Let us mourn together, for fate crushes the brave). Especially notable is the combination of the two related themes—*Occasio* (*Kairos*) with her forelock and *Fortuna* with her wheel in the same poem (CB 14–18). Although the eight illuminations, presumably added to the codex in the thirteenth century, do not include the personification of *Occasio*, a colorful illumination of *Fortuna* and her wheel was placed on the cover by the bookbinder. A rare combination of these two themes is depicted on twelfth century marble reliefs at Torcello, as discussed below.

The *Carmina Burana* passage where *Kairos* "*verum est quod legitur, fronte capillata, sed plerumque sequitur calvata*" (It is true what is read, that *Kairos* has a forehead with hair, but almost always passes being bald),<sup>15</sup> recalls the

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an occasion, besides the space of time implied in the word, there is indicated an especial opportunity of doing something. As therefore the two are identical in genus, it is some portion and species, as it were, in which the one differs, as we have said, from the other." trans. C.D. Yonge, *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, vol. 4, London, 1888.

<sup>13</sup> Lucian, *De calumnia*. The text was translated from Greek into Latin by Guarino da Verona (1406–1408), Filelfo (before 1428) and Lapo di Castiglionchio (ca. 1435); the first edition of his works was issued in 1499 in Florence. See my discussion of the illustrations below.

<sup>14</sup> *Codex latinus Monacensis* (clm) 4660 & 4660a, Munich, Bavarian State Library. The manuscript was found in 1803 in the Benedictine monastery of Benediktbeuern, Bavaria but its source is unknown. See B. Bischoff (ed.), *Carmina Burana* (facsimile & introduction), 2 vols., New York & Munich, 1967–71.

<sup>15</sup> *Carmina Burana*, 16–17.

famous quotation from the Latin *Disticha catonis* of a writer named Cato (3rd or 4th c. A.D.): *Rem, tibi quam noscis aptam, dimittere noli; Fronte capillata, post est occasio calva* (Don't let that what you consider good for you escape by chance; [*Occasio*] has hair over her forehead, but behind she's bald).<sup>16</sup> Cato's *Disticha* became the most popular medieval text book for the study of Latin and moral advice, was translated into many languages and remained influential during the Renaissance and after. He demonstrated an early translation of the Greek masculine form *Kairos* into the Latin feminine *Occasio*, which would modify the gender of the artistic personification as subsequently transmitted to Christian art. In an earlier poem by the fabulist Phaedrus (2nd c. A.D.), an effigy retaining the original gender of the Greek model is named *Tempus*, who is described as *Calvus, comosa fronte, nudo occipitio*.<sup>17</sup>

Compelling evidence for the visual and literary tradition of *Kairos* in the Byzantine world leads us back to the Lausus Collection in fifth century Constantinople.<sup>18</sup> Lausus, who served as chamberlain at the court of the Emperor Theodosius II, was renowned for the huge collection of famous heroic and mythological statues exhibited in his palace, the Lauseion. The entire collection was destroyed in the year 475, during the terrible conflagration in Constantinople. According to later Byzantine sources, it was surmised that the original *Kairos* by Lysippos was placed alongside the huge statue by Phidias of Zeus from Olympia, flanked on the other side by a marble statue of Eros, also attributed to Lysippos. Evidence for the *Kairos* statue and its modified Byzantine interpretation is found in the writings of Giorgios Kedrenos (late 11th c.), John Zonaras and Nikephoros Blemmydes (both 12th c.).<sup>19</sup> The figure was described by Kedrenos and others as *Chronos*, bald behind and long haired in front.

Another late medieval reference to the *Kairos* of Lysippos, with moralistic gloss, was that of the Byzantine poet and grammarian John Tzetzes (12th C.), who also lived in Constantinople. In his Greek *Epistolae* he

<sup>16</sup> Cato, *Disticha Catonis* II, 26. 2.

<sup>17</sup> See Phaedrus (2nd c.), V, 8. 2 in B.E. Perry, *Babrius and Phaedrus*, newly edited, London, Cambridge, Mass., 1965. Phaedrus described the image of *Kairos/Occasio* but called it an effigy of *Tempus*; consequently some 19th c. authors considered it a reference to a different statue, see Matzke (as in note 2), 315–16.

<sup>18</sup> See Francis P. Johnson, *Lysippos*, Durham, NC, 1927, esp. 163–65; Andrew F. Stewart, "Lyssipan Studies I: The Only Creator of Beauty," *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol. 82, 1978, 163–71; Sarah Guberti Bassett, "Excellent Offerings: The Lausus Collection in Constantinople," *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 82, No. 1, Mar. 2000, 6–25.

<sup>19</sup> Guberti Bassett (as above), 6–7, 9–10.

described the forelock, bald head, and winged feet perched on a sphere, but added that the figure was nude and deaf, thus rendering it impossible to stop him once he had passed, as demonstrated by a man behind who followed or called him in vain.<sup>20</sup> Instead of the usual razor, this figure was said to carry a sword in order to inflict mortal blows on one who is late. Tzetzes insisted that this figure was *Chronos*, not *Bios* as claimed by some contemporaries, such as Theodor Prodromos (ca. 1100–ca. 1165/70), who identified *Bios* as a nude figure, with wheels beneath his winged feet, and scales in his hand, who can easily escape from his pursuer.<sup>21</sup> Prodromos was a poet at the Byzantine court who ended his life as a monk, and his interpretation of the figure as *Bios* appears to have been adopted in Eastern monastic circles to illustrate their commitment to celibacy and ascetic self-denial.<sup>22</sup> Evidence of this survives in two miniatures of an 11th century manuscript of the *Ladder of Paradise* by John Climacus (7th c.), written and illuminated at the monastery of Vatos (now St. Catherine) at Mt. Sinai. In one, the naked youth on wheels, inscribed *Bios*, pursues a monk who looks back as he is accompanied by *Aprospatheia* (Indifference to the World). In the second miniature the monk stands resolutely in the face of the oncoming *Bios* and the family he leaves behind.<sup>23</sup> A later epigram on the same subject, by Manuel Philes (ca. 1275–ca. 1345), repeats the *Bios* identification of this same figure.<sup>24</sup>

Arthur Bernard Cook, in his classic study of *Kairos*, mentions a theory that the figure at Constantinople might have been identified as *Chronos* because it was a bearded copy.<sup>25</sup> I find this theory untenable on several grounds. The beard is not mentioned in Byzantine descriptions, but there are bearded versions of *Kairos* in antique gems, which suggests that the terms *Kairos* and *Chronos* (or *Tempus*) were sometimes interchangeable, even in antiquity, as noted above in the poem by Phaedrus.<sup>26</sup> We need only recall Cicero's famous definition *occasio est pars temporis* (*De inv.* I, 27) to see that the interchangeability of terms was not only semantic.

<sup>20</sup> Tzetze, *Epistolae* 70; Greek text quoted by Cook (as in note 4), 864, n. 7.

<sup>21</sup> *Epigrammata*, in *Quatuor Evangelia*, British Library, Add Ms. 5117; see Cook, (as in note 4), 860–65, figs. 796–98.

<sup>22</sup> For the original Greek epigram by Prodromos, see Cook (as in note 4), 865, n. 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Cod. Vat. Gr.* 394, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; reproduced by Cook (as in note 4), 867, fig. 803.

<sup>24</sup> Philes, *Carm.* 67; For Greek text, see Cook (as in note 4), 866–67, note 1.

<sup>25</sup> Cook (as in note 4), 864, n. 4.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 860, figs. 796–797 for examples of antique gems. For reference to the interchange of *Occasio* and *Tempus*, see above, note 16.

A clear differentiation between temporal personifications was not always maintained and attributes could also be interchanged. Wittkower mentioned that *Occasio*, with one foot on a wheel, and *Tempus*, with scales, were both depicted under different arches on a late Roman sarcophagus.<sup>27</sup>

Another application of the term *kairos* was made by the Byzantine historian and astronomer Nicophoros Gregorio (ca. 1295–ca. 1369), who used it in reference to the *Annunciation to the Virgin*, illustrating how the concept of the propitious moment could be applied in a sacred context.<sup>28</sup> In the 15th c. Angelo Poliziano was familiar with this source and wrote: “*Nicophorum quoque non inelegantem scriptorem Graecum, sic ordiri, quam de vergine deipara composuit orationem, ut cum super imagine ista nescio temporis dixerim, an Occasionis loquatur, referat eam ad temporis illius, qui sit Graece chronos, fugacissimam celeritatem*”.<sup>29</sup>

### *Classical Reliefs of Kairos*

Three or four extant monumental copies, derived from the original statue, date from antiquity and enable us to partially reconstruct the lost bronze of Lysippos. All of these are marble reliefs and date between the 3rd c. B.C. to approximately the 5th c. A.D. The oldest appears to be the fragment of the personification at the Convent of St. Nicholas, Trogir (Croatia), generally dated to the third century B.C. when Trogir (ancient Tragurium) was a Greek settlement (Fig. 91). This nude *Kairos* is young and athletic, his masculinity emphasized by a prominent phallus. His running movement is strenuous, and his scales are precariously supported on a hemispheric razor. As in all the other extant copies, the figure is viewed in profile, which suggests that either the original bronze was not a three-dimensional statue or else the known replicas were made from an early copy in relief that emphasized the most significant viewpoint. A complete and well preserved relief of pentelic marble, in Torino, depicts the same athletic youth with large wings on his shoulders and a pair of wings on each heel (Fig. 92). Here, as in the Trogir version, his fingers are manipulating but not actually touching the scales. This relief, assigned to the mid 2nd A.D., is considered to have been part of an attic sarcophagus.

<sup>27</sup> R. Wittkower, “Chance, Time and Virtue,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 1, 1937–38, 313–21: see note 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Cod. Vat. graec.* 1086, fol. 131, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; *P.G.* vol. CXLVII, coll. 49ff.

<sup>29</sup> Angelo Poliziano, *Miscellaneorum centuria prima*, Florence, Antonio Miscomini, 1489; Lyon, 1528, 578–79.



a

Fig. 91. *Kairos*, 3rd c. B.C., marble relief, Trogir (Croatia), Convent of St. Nicholas.  
Author's photo.





b



Fig. 92. *Kairos*, mid. 2nd c. A.D., marble relief, Torino, Ministero per I Beni e le Attività Culturali @ Archivio della Soprintendenza per I Beni Archeologici del Piemonte e del Museo Antichità Egizie.

An onyx gem of the British Museum (1st or 2nd c.) shows *Kairos* bearded with wings on his shoulders, a globe beneath his foot and a balance swaying on the razor's edge. He also holds a butterfly in his hand.<sup>30</sup> The butterfly is exceptional in *Kairos* iconography and may represent time's volubility, but it is also related to the classical image of the soul in funeral or eschatological contexts.

Most problematic of the artistic replicas is the very one that served as the prime model for the image of *Kairos* adopted in sixteenth century

<sup>30</sup> Cook (as in note 4), 860, figs. 796 & 797.



Fig. 93. *Kairos*, late 15th c. (?), marble relief, ex. Medici collection (present location unknown).

Florentine art (Fig. 93). This relief, described by Vasari (1568),<sup>31</sup> was located in Lorenzo de' Medici's collection at the Palazzo Medici in Via Larga, and at some point was exhibited in the palace loggia, where it was sketched by several Florentine artists in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>32</sup> In

<sup>31</sup> See Giorgio Vasari, *Vite*, vol. IV, Milanese, 1879, 218. The old photograph was exhibited online by Ellen Papakyriakou/Anagnostou, 1998–2010: [http://www.sikyon.com/sicyon/lysippos/lysip\\_egpg07.html](http://www.sikyon.com/sicyon/lysippos/lysip_egpg07.html).

<sup>32</sup> Vasari-Milanese, *Vite*, *Ibid.* Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi & Erkingen Schwarzenberg, "Un Kairos Mediceo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, vol. 35, nos. 2/3, 1991, 307–13, undertook a thorough reconstruction of the documented history and provenance of the Medici relief. I am indebted to their research for the information regarding the late history of the relief. The letter of 1878 with the enclosed photograph was discovered by them in the *Archivio della Soprintendenza per I Beni Artistici e Storici di Firenze*. Drawings attributed to Fra Bartolomeo (Uffizi) and another, unidentified Florentine artist of the 16th c. are reproduced by S. Ferino-Pagden: "Zwei Zeichnungen nach dem Medici-

1598 it was still located in the Palazzo Medici, in the collection of Grand Duke Ferdinand I, when it was documented as a “*quadretto di marmo di braccia uno per ogni verso, dentrovi un vecchio con l'ali, fi[g]urato il tempo, di basso rilievo*”.<sup>33</sup> For two centuries it was in the palace of Robert Dudley, Earl of Warwick and Leicester, in *Via della Vigna Nuova* in Florence. According to Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi and Erkinger Schwarzenberg, it reappeared in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, in the possession of Cavaliere Raffaello Ettore Lamponi, Florentine *Capitano dei Carabinieri*, who requested a permit from the direction of the *Gallerie fiorentine* to sell the piece to an unnamed foreign source, concurrently offering it to the Italian state for the same price—50,000 lire.<sup>34</sup> The government commission appointed to evaluate its artistic value requested the professional estimation of two prominent sculptors, Dupré and Santarelli, who judged it to be an authentic Greek sculpture. Lamponi's letter described the work as “*monumento Greco mezzo rilievo, per marmo pentelico rappresentante un vecchio ignudo con le ali alle spalle ed ai piedi e che sta ponderando un paio di balance, opera attribuita allo scalpello di Fidìa, e citata di Giorgio Vasari*”. The letter was accompanied by the only extant photograph of the former Medici relief. After a refusal on the part of the Italian government to pay the requested price, following a second unfavorable opinion from an archaeological commission in Rome regarding the authenticity of the relief, Lamponi received an export license in 1878.<sup>35</sup> Milanesi assumed that the relief was then sent to the Louvre, in view of a former agreement with the museum, but its fate has been a mystery till now.

Several Florentine artists sketched this relief in the late fifteenth and early 16th centuries. One extant drawing has been attributed to Mariotto Albertinelli or his studio (Fig. 95) based on Vasari's description: “*e perché Mariotto non era tanto fondato nel disegno . . . si diede allo studio di quelle anticaglie che erano allora in Fiorenza, la maggior parte e le migliori della quale erano in casa medici: e disegnò assai volte alcuni quadretti di mezzo rilievo che erano sotto la loggia nel giardino di verso San Lorenzo . . . in uno dei quali sono due putti che portano il fulmine di Giove, nel alto è un ignudo vecchio fatto per l'Occasione, che ha le ali sopra le spalle ed a' piedi ponderano con le*

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Kairos,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, vol. 41, no. 3, 1997, 382–87, figs. 2 & 3).

<sup>33</sup> See Laurie Fusti & Gino Corti, *Lorenzo de' Medici, Collector and Antiquarian*, Cambridge, Mass., 2006, 388.

<sup>34</sup> Regarding this letter and the photograph of the former Medici relief, see Paolozzi Strozzi & Schwarzenberg (as in note 32), 314–155, note 7.

<sup>35</sup> Vasari-Milanesi, 1879 (as in note 31), vol. IV, 218–219, n. 3.



*mani un par di bilance.*<sup>36</sup> This may be the same drawing that has recently been attributed to Fra Bartolomeo.<sup>37</sup> The two surviving drawings look more like studies made from a live model than copies of a marble relief, even though they suggest the wings that appear in the sculpture. These drawings seem to demonstrate the mannerist practice of copying classical sculpture instead of live models in the creation of stock figures to be used in paintings.<sup>38</sup> The artist of the Uffizi drawing, furthermore, had already made changes in the original physiognomy of the relief, replacing the delicate Greek profile with what looks like a portrait of a man with distinctive features and adding anatomical details to the right leg (Fig. 94).

The classical identity of the Medici relief was already doubted in the nineteenth century and it is still suspected to be a Renaissance copy.<sup>39</sup> No attempt, however, has been made to identify the artist or his presumed classical model. Judging from the authentic looking classical style and carving, it would have been carved in the late *Quattrocento* (*terminus ante quem* 1492) by a sculptor associated with Lorenzo de' Medici and familiar with his antiquarian collection.<sup>40</sup> Could his model have been a plaster cast of the *Kairos* relief, now in the Museo Archaeologico of Torino (Fig. 92), which is almost identical except for the bearded head? The fragmentary relief at Trogir, for which we have no documentation, might have been the source, but we have no indication that it was known to the Renaissance either in its original or fragmented form.

Perhaps the answer lies with the marble relief of *Kairos*, located in the storerooms of the Department of Antiquities at the Hermitage Museum, Saint-Petersburg. It reproduces the identical male figure with the addition of a full beard, like those depicted in late classical gems, transforming him from a youth into a mature man (Fig. 96). The form of the razor is converted into a sphere divided by a lunar shape, suggesting a solar-lunar

<sup>36</sup> Vasari-Milanesi, vol. IV, *Vita di Mariotto Albertinelli*.

<sup>37</sup> See Ferino-Pagden (as in note 32)

<sup>38</sup> See the excellent study by Leatrice Mendelson, "The Sum of the Parts, Recycling Antiquities if the Maniera Workshops of Salviati and his Colleagues," in *Francesco Salviati et la Bella Maniera*, Rome, 2001, 107–48.

<sup>39</sup> Paolozzi Strozzi & Schwarzenberg (as in note 32), 311.

<sup>40</sup> As noted by Fusti & Corti (as in note 33), Bertoldo di Giovanni lived in Palazzo Medici, was curator of Lorenzo's antiquities and drew on these for works of art *all'antica*, and Verocchio undertook the restoration of antique statues in Lorenzo's collection. Among the sculptors who might have copied a plaster cast of the *Kairos* relief were pupils of Bertoldo in the Medici garden, including Michelangelo whose *Head of a Faun*, *Battle of the Centaurs* and the *Cupid* demonstrated his dependence on antique sculpture in his early period.



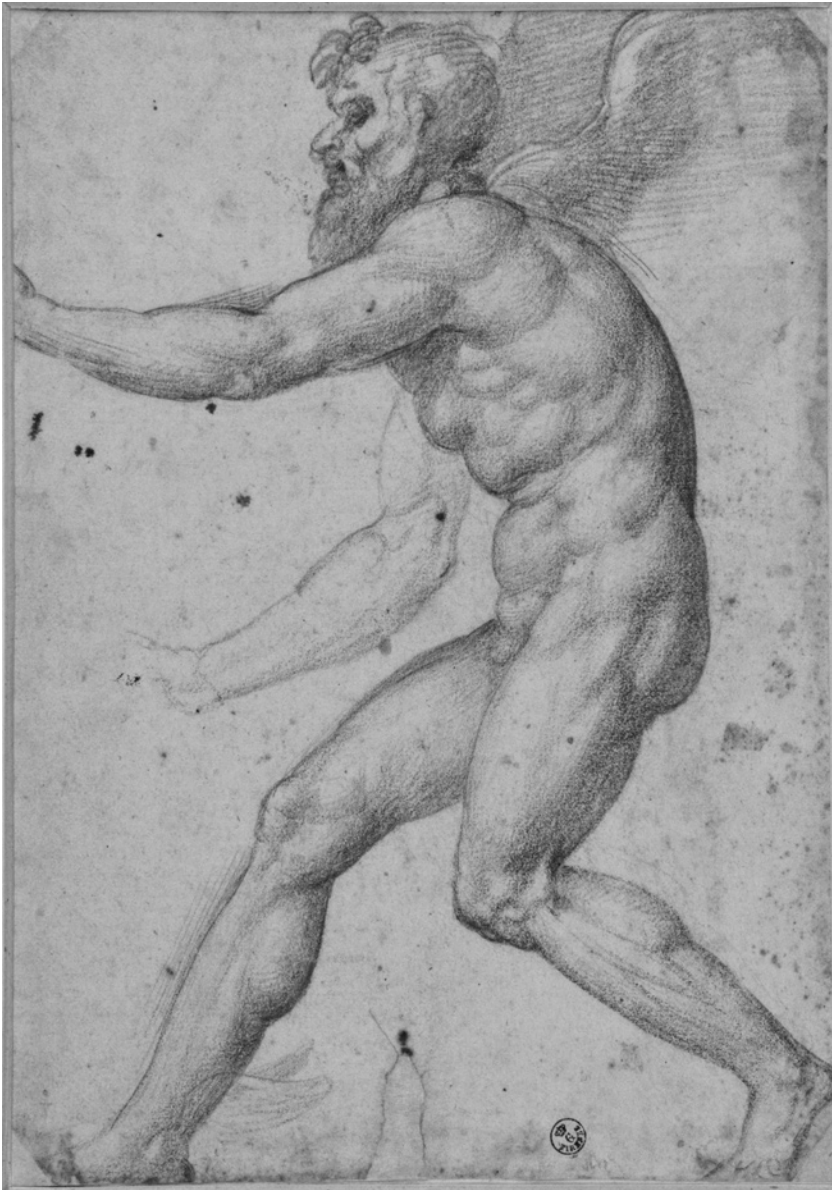


Fig. 94. *Drawing of the Medici Kairos*, ca. 1494, attributed to Fra Bartolomeo or his studio, Florence, Inv. 14886 F., Uffizi, Gabinetto dei Disegni e Stampe. Photo: Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino.



Fig. 95. *Drawing of the Medici Kairos*, ca. 1494, past attributions to Sebastiano del Piombo, Mariotto Albertinelli and Alessandro Allori, Paris, École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Inv. 260. Photo: RMN.



Fig. 96. *Kairos*, Relief. Marble. H 61 cm. Inv. no. GR-6982 (A.544). The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum. Photo by Svetlana Suetova, Konstantin Sinyavsky.

symbol. Executed in low relief in the background is a small herm with a bearded head, resembling that of *Kairos*, emerging from a flaming pedestal. The work was damaged and has been heavily restored; the broken left forearm has been badly mended, the right side with the wings has been cut down and the left side of the scales is missing. The addition of the herm is problematical; it was crudely inserted, damaging the left scale that is now missing and may have been obliterated. It appears possible that the relief of *Kairos* in the Hermitage may very well be that of the Medici Collection, now altered by heavy damage and added carvings. This possibility is supported by the particular iconography of the mature *Kairos*, the size of the relief and the fifteenth century assignation. The height of the Hermitage relief, after being severely cut down from its original size is 61 cm., as compared to 66 cm. × 64 cm.—the dimensions of the Medici relief recorded in the 1878 document.

The Greek inscription incised on the relief's lower right hand side assigned the work to *Agoracritos* (ΑΓΟΡΑΚΡΙΤΟΣ ΠΟΙΕΙ), the pupil of Phidias, who was said to have signed some of his master's work.<sup>41</sup> The attribution seems to derive from the *Occasio* Epigram of Ausonius, whose writings were already published in Venice in 1472 (*editio princeps* by Bartholomaeus Girardinus), followed by editions issued in Milan (1490), Parma (1499) Venice (1496, 1501, 1507), Florence (1503) and numerous others throughout the sixteenth century and after. In 1549, not long before Vasari composed his *Vite*, an edition of Ausonius was issued at Lyon. Angelo Poliziano (1454–1494), who was well versed in the relevant Greek sources, including the epigram by Ausonius, attributed the original relief of *Kairos* to Lysippos.<sup>42</sup> Although Lamponi realized that the inscription was a late forgery (late 16th c. ?) the attribution to Phidias was still quoted in his letter.

The former Medici relief and that of the Hermitage both deviate from the tradition of the youthful *Kairos* due to the addition of a heavy beard. We have noted that bearded versions of *Kairos* were also identified on late classical gems. It has been suggested that this reflects the identification of *Kairos* with *Chronos* in late classical and Byzantine writings.<sup>43</sup> This

<sup>41</sup> Plinius, *Hist. Nat.*, XXXIV, 65 & XXXVI, 17.

<sup>42</sup> Angelo Poliziano, *Miscellaneorum centuria prima*, originally published with a dedication to Lorenzo de' Medici by Antonio Miscomini, Florence, 1489 & 1491; Lyon, 1528, 578–79. The epigram was later included in the Aldine edition of his collected works. See quoted passage below and reference to Paolozzi Strozzi & Schwarzenberg (as in note 32), 311, 315 & n. 13. See I Maier (ed.), *Angelo Poliziano, Opera omnia*, 3 vols., Torino, 1970.

<sup>43</sup> Mantiacci (as in note 3), 130.



idea has been based on literary conflations, such as that by Phaedrus, who described the allegory of the fleeing nude figure but called it *effigiem Temporis*.<sup>44</sup> We have seen, however, that *Chronos* is associated in classical literature with cosmological metaphors of time, such as father, healer and conqueror of all—concepts that are contrary to the idea of flux, passage, movement and the irreversibility of fate, inherent in metaphors of the propitious moment. It is highly doubtful, therefore, that a personification of *Chronos* or *Tempus* in classical art would in any way resemble the nude, bearded *Kairos* balancing his scales on a razor as he races by.

### *The Fate of Kairos/Occasio in Medieval Art*

A fascinating relic of medieval *Kairos* is imbedded in the base of the pulpit at *Santa Maria Assunta*, the Cathedral of Torcello (Fig. 97).<sup>45</sup> This allegorical marble relief has been assigned to the late eleventh or twelfth century, but its derivation is still shrouded in mystery. *Kairos* is precariously perched on two rotating wheels, attached to the wings at his feet, and the figure of *Penitence* remains to mourn her tardiness. About four-hundred years later Machiavelli, in his Italian version of the Latin epigram, would write: “È Penitenza; e però nota e intendi: Chi non sa prender me, costei ritiene. E tu, mentre parlando il tempo spendi, occupato da molti pensieri, già non t’avvedi, lasso! e non comprendi com’io ti son fuggita tra le mani”.

The relief was damaged and a fragment from the extreme left side, showing *Nike/Victoria* with a crown and palm, was discovered in 1887 by Raffaele Cattaneo in a marble workshop in Venice.<sup>46</sup> According to Renato Polacco, this relief together with that of a revolving figure on a wheel, located nearby, probably originated in the Basilica of San Marco (Fig. 98).<sup>47</sup> He suggested that they were transferred to their present location during reconstructions, sometime between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. Polacco attributed them to a Venetian workshop—a reasonable assumption in view of the numerous marble *plutei*, comparable in size, with similar decorative frame motifs, located both in the Basilica of San Marco and

<sup>44</sup> Cook (as in note 4), 860–61 & Matiaci (as in note 3), 131.

<sup>45</sup> See Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venice and Antiquity, The Venetian Sense of the Past*, New Haven & London, 1996, 2–9.

<sup>46</sup> Raffaele Cattaneo, *L’architettura in Italia dal secolo VI al mille circa*, Venezia, 1888, 288.

<sup>47</sup> Renato Polacco, *La Cattedrale di Torcello*, Treviso, 1984, 35–36.





Fig. 97. *Relief of Kairos*, late 11th or early 12th century, Torcello, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta. Author's photo.

in Torcello.<sup>48</sup> Referring them to the time of Doge Domenico Contarini (1043–70), Polacco nevertheless admits that the two unique reliefs differ from the “*sculture contariani impostate su temi o cristiani o genericamente decorative*”.<sup>49</sup> Similarities of the narrative depictions to French and north Italian Romanesque prototypes might suggest a local *bottega* where Byzantine and western models were conflated. It is also possible that the reliefs were imported as *spoglia* or were copies of such.

The narrative progression of the *Kairos* relief seem to unfold from left to right, but it actually focuses on two counter-opposed but interrelated temporal narratives that intersect in the image of *Kairos* proceeding on winged wheels in a right to left direction. The depiction begins with the personification of *Nike/Victory*, on the left, and ends with *Penitence*, who holds her head in frustration, on the right. A male figure appears on either side of *Kairos*; the youth preceding him has caught his forelock,

<sup>48</sup> Renato Polacco, *Collezioni e Musei, Sculture Paleocristiane e Altomedievale di Torcello*, Treviso, 1976: e.g. cat. nos. 13, 17 & 41.

<sup>49</sup> Polacco, 1984 (as in note 47), 35.



Fig. 98. *Figure Revolving on a Wheel*, late 11th or early 12th century, Torcello, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta. Author's photo.

the bearded man behind remains empty handed. The female personifications at the beginning and end convey the didactic message—one who acts at the propitious moment will receive the palm of victory; the other will regret the time that elapsed due to his procrastination. The existential dimension of passing time is represented by the opposing directions of the episodes. The elderly man who has forfeited his chance mourns the irretrievable past; the youth who foresees and masters opportunity is proceeding towards a glorious future.

The sense of qualitative and teleological time seems to be realized in the succession of past, present and future, yet the present is negated by its fugitive mobility, recalling St. Augustine's contradictory definition of time: the past no longer exists, the future is yet to be, and the present, if it be truly present, is by virtue of its immobility, eternity.<sup>50</sup> To solve the dilemma, Augustine relegated the three parts of time to the realm of

<sup>50</sup> Augustine, *Confessiones* XI, Migne, *P.L.* chap. XIV. (I.CXLVIII, coll. 49ff.?)

psychic experience as memory, attention and expectation.<sup>51</sup> The idea was perhaps borrowed from Cicero's definition of *Prudentia*: "*Prudence is the knowledge of what is good, what is bad and what is neither good nor bad. Its parts are memory, intelligence and foresight. Memory is the faculty by which the mind recalls what has happened. Intelligence is the faculty by which it ascertains what is. Foresight is the faculty by which it is seen that something is going to occur before it occurs.*"<sup>52</sup> The mythographer Fulgentius (late 5th–early 6th c.), who interpreted Virgil according to moral philosophy, wrote "Prudence is composed of three faculties—memory, intelligence and foresight, of which the respective functions are to conserve the past, to know the present and to foresee the future. Prudence surveys the tripartite span of life".<sup>53</sup> Medieval scholars, such as Pierre Bersuire (ca. 1290–1362) in his *Repertorium morale*, and Nicolas Oresme (ca. 1320/5–1382) in his French translation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, continued to elaborate on the definition of *Prudentia* in terms of tripartite time.<sup>54</sup> Due to this introspective definition of the parts of time and their analogy to those of *Prudentia*, the subject was adopted in medieval treatises on the virtues.<sup>55</sup> The tripartite division of the Torcello relief, where *Poenitentia* (*Penitence*) represents memory, the grasping of *Kairos* demonstrates intelligence, and *Victoria* is the object of foresight or expectation, can thus be perceived as a Christian allegory of *Prudentia*, one of the four cardinal virtues.

The wheel of Fortune, popularized in art of the same period, dramatized the ultimate downfall of those who sought to obtain worldly possessions

<sup>51</sup> "*Sunt enim haec in anima tua quaedam, et alibi eo non video; praesens de praeteritis memoria, praesens de praesentibus contuitus, praesens de futuris exspectatio.*" Augustine (as above), chap. XX; cf. chap. XXVIII.

<sup>52</sup> Cicero, *De Inventione*, II, liii, 160: "*Prudentia est rerum bonarum et malarum neutramque scientia. Partes eius: memoria, intellegentia, providential. Memoria est per quam animus repetit illa quae fuerunt; intellegentia per quam ea perspicit quae sunt; providential, per quam futurum aliquid videtur ante quam factum est*", edit. and trans. by M.H. Hubbel, Cambridge, MA, 1949, repr. 1968, 326–27.

<sup>53</sup> Fulgentius, *Expositio Virgilianae continentiae*, Leipzig, 1898; *Fulgentius*, translated by Leslie George Whitbread, Ohio, 1971; *Selected Works/Fulgentius*, translated by Robert B. Eno, Washington D.C., 1997.

<sup>54</sup> Pierre Bersuire's, *Repertorium morale*, Book XV. Composed for preachers about 1340, it was repeatedly printed during the Renaissance: in Cologne, 1477; Nuremberg, 1489; Lyon, 1517; Venice, 1589, etc. Regarding Oresme, see Claire Richter Sherman, *Imaging Aristotle, Verbal and Visual Representation in Fourteenth-Century France*, Berkeley, 1995, 127–29. On Prudence in the Middle ages, see Charles Brucker, "Prudentia/Prudence aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles," *Romanische Forschungen* 83, 1971, 464–79.

<sup>55</sup> See M. Wellington Gahtan, "Notions of Past and Future in Italian Renaissance Art and Letters," in C. Heck & K. Lippincott, *Symbols of Time in the History of Art*, Turnhout, 2002, 69–83, esp. 69–70.

and glory. The wheel, by contrast, is a cyclic image of volubility and does not express linear time or the psychic experience thereof, as portrayed by the Torcello relief. Moralizations of *Kairos* and *Metanoia*, as seen in the writings of Lucian (2nd C.) and Ausonius (4th c.), and subsequently of *Chronos* and *Metanoia* in John Tzetzes (12th C.), were assumedly direct or indirect sources of inspiration. The identification of this figure as *Bios*, however, in late medieval Eastern writings, might suggest an alternative significance for the Christian moralization. Cook discussed two late medieval miniatures that depict *Bios* as a nude youth on wheels chasing a fleeing monk, with a basket on his shoulder. The monk is escorted by the personification *Aprospatheia* (Indifference to the World),<sup>56</sup> alluding to the ideal of monastic detachment. By contrast, the Torcello relief depicts a prudent youth about to seize the moment, not an ascetic monk fleeing worldly rewards. Its didactic message was directed to the congregation, not the clergy, as further demonstrated by its location. Considering its context on a pulpit, one may assume that its message was reiterated by the preacher's sermons while its iconography served as a didactic medium for a largely illiterate public.

It has been noted that a contemporaneous marble relief, now in the chancel of the Torcello Cathedral, carved with an almost identical decorative frame, may originally have been associated with the *Kairos* image. It depicts a male figure wound about a wheel that appears to be rotated by two figures holding rod-like objects (Fig. 98). The subject is elusive. It might have been inspired by the myth of Ixion, archetypal sinner, bound to a burning solar wheel as punishment for his transgressions,<sup>57</sup> but it bears greater resemblance to contemporaneous images of saints tortured on wheels.<sup>58</sup> The fact that the figure on the left lowers her rod, while that on the right carries it upright on her shoulder, may suggest the negative and positive rewards of *Fortuna*. In any case the revolving man seems to illustrate *Fortuna*'s torturous punishment of the transgressor, as described in the text of the *Carmina Burana*, (but without its hedonistic conclusion): "Thou dost withdraw my health and virtue; thou dost threaten my emotion and weakness with torture". In other words, while the metaphoric

<sup>56</sup> Cook (as in note 4), 867.

<sup>57</sup> The figure of Ixion standing upright on the wheel, and posed like the Vitruvian man, was depicted in antiquity; see Larissa Bonfante & Judith Swaddling, *Etruscan Myths*, Austin, 2006, 29, fig. 15.

<sup>58</sup> See 12th c. mural painting of the martyrdom of Saints Savin and Cyprien in the crypt of the church of Saint-Savin sur Gartemps, in Robert Favreau, *Saint-Savin: l'abbaye et ses peintures murales*, Poitiers, 1999, fig. My thanks to Gill Fishhoff for this reference.

wheel was meant to be admonitory, the *Kairos* allegory optimistically conveyed the message that a prudent, judicious man could realize his pursuits in due time. *Nike/Victoria* would provide the rewards for one who virtuously exploits his time. Could this have been the first proto-Renaissance effort to express the classical concept of *Kairos* in a monumental work of art? Even more remarkable is the evidence it presents of changing perceptions, anticipating the Renaissance discourse on *Occasio*, with its pragmatic implications regarding human potential, self-determination, and practical achievement.

### Pigliar il Tempo: Kairos/Occasio and Fortuna in the Early Renaissance

The significant transformation of *Fortuna* in Renaissance literature and iconography has been discussed in important articles by Aby Warburg (1907), Ernst Cassirer (1927), Rudolf Wittkower (1937–38), Frederick Kiefer (1979), Florence Buttay-Jutier (2008) and others.<sup>59</sup> Several aspects that are related to the conceptions of time will be reconsidered here. By the mid fifteenth century some of the attributes of *Kairos/Occasio*, such as the forelock and elusive mobility, were conflated with the female personification of *Fortuna*, who had meanwhile forfeited her large wheel and regal attributes of sovereignty. But the survival of *Kairos*, having undergone a gender transformation as *Occasio*, is attested by the late fifteenth century fresco that is assigned to Mantegna or his school (Fig. 99). Its meaning in the Mantuan context may be elucidated by contemporary evidence. We have noted the frequent publications of Ausonius, including the epigram “*In simulacrum occasionis et poenitentiae*”, following the venetian *editio princeps* of 1472. By the late fifteenth century moralistic connotations of the late medieval *Kairos* allegory were replaced by secular and politically oriented interpretations. Mario Equicola (ca. 1470–1525), humanist and neo-Latin author at the Gonzaga court, wrote a letter to the ruler and condottiere Francesco Gonzaga in 1503, in which he referred to an occasion

<sup>59</sup> Aby Warburg, “Les derniers volontés de Francesco Sassetti,” in his *Essais florentins*, trans. S. Müller, Paris, 2003 (originally published as “Francesco Sassettis letswillige Verfügung,” in *Kunstwissenschaftliche Beiträge August Schmarsow gewidmet*, Leipzig, 1907); Ernst Cassirer, *Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance*, Leipzig, 1927; Wittkower (as in note 27), 313–21; F. Kiefer, “The Conflation of Fortuna and Occasio in Renaissance thought and iconography,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, vol. 9, 1979, 1–27; F. Buttay-Jutier, *Fortuna, Usages politiques d’une allégorie morale à la Renaissance*, Paris, 2008.





Fig. 99. Allegory of *Occasio* and *Poenitentia*, fresco, ca. 1500–1505, attributed to Mantegna or his school. Mantua, Palazzo Ducale.

to strike at the Spanish. The terms he used were based on the Mantuan fresco and the epigram of Ausonius that was its source.<sup>60</sup> In his letter he describes *Occasio*'s wings, the ball that demonstrates her instability, and the forelock that hides her identity and which, as she escapes, also prevents her from being caught. According to Equicola, this illustrates, that which is called in volgare "*pigliar il Tempo*" (to catch Time).

A stern looking *Penitenza* in the fresco, modestly covered in a long dress and veiled headdress, holds back a struggling youth. Her square platform is juxtaposed with the unstable round ball under *Occasio*'s winged foot.<sup>61</sup> By 1472 the figure of *Penitenza* would assume a permanent role in illustrations to Lucian of Samosate's *ekphrasis* of the *Calumnia of Apelles*

<sup>60</sup> For Equicola's letter, see S. Kolsky, *Mario Equicola: The Real Courtier*, Geneva, 1991, 89ff.

<sup>61</sup> Maticci (as in note 3), 148, mentions that verses of the epigram by Ausonius were quoted in Equicola's *De opportunitate*, published in Naples, 1507.

(2nd c.).<sup>62</sup> In a monochrome drawing of about 1504/06 (British Museum) Mantegna illustrated Lucien's text in a horizontal narrative format that may reflect his knowledge of the Torcello relief (Fig. 100). His *Penitenza* in the *Calumnia* scene, in the guise of a mourner with a head shawl, turns away from the allegorical procession clasping her hands in a posture of remorse. *Calumnia* (Slander), rushing forward towards the donkey-eared judge at the extreme left (often identified as Ptolemy or Midas), is the only dynamic figure in the group, her position echoing that of *Kairos*. Around 1506 this was copied in an engraving by Girolamo Mocetto, who added the Venetian *Campo di Santi Giovanni e Paolo* in the background, thus demonstrating the adoption of the allegory to local contexts (Fig. 101).<sup>63</sup> In an elaborated version of the *Calumnia* allegory by the Mantuan court painter Lorenzo Leonbruno, he eclectically combined Mantega's drawing with visual quotations from some of the artist's other Mantuan works, and the figures of *Fortuna* and *Father Time* were introduced to preside over the slanderous proceedings.<sup>64</sup> This emphasis on the destructive power of time in the 1520s corresponded with contemporary developments in illustrations to the *Trionfo del Tempo* that were printed in Venice.

### Occasio & Fortuna—the Literary Tradition of the Early Cinquecento

In his chapter on "Freedom and Necessity in the Philosophy of the Renaissance", Ernst Cassirer demonstrated that issues of self-affirmation and *libero arbitrio*, opposed to the forces of destiny and visualized in the medieval image of Fortuna, had increasingly found expression in Renaissance literature, philosophy and pageant.<sup>65</sup> Beginning with Petrarch's *De*

<sup>62</sup> The first representation of this theme in art was that of Bartolomeo Fonzio, who illustrated Lucien's *De calumnia*, 5 for Ercole I d'Este in the *Libro della Guardaroba* (1472). See J.M. Massing, *Du texte a l'image. La Calomnie d'Apelle et son iconographie*, Strasbourg, 1990. For this illustration and many others that followed during the Renaissance and after, see S. Agnoletto, "La Calumnia di Apelle: recupero e riconversione ecfraistica del trattato di Luciano in Occidente," *La Rivista di Engramma*, 42, luglio-agosto, 2005 (available online), which was based on Massing's book. Lucien's *De calumnia* was first printed among his *Opere* in Florence, 1499. It was translated into French and published in Paris, 1548 & 1550, and in Lyon, 1551.

<sup>63</sup> Reproduced in Bartsch XIII, 113, 10; see Agnoletto (as above).

<sup>64</sup> See Leandro Ventura, *Lorenzo Leonbruno: un Pittore a Corte della Mantova di Primo Cinquecento*, Rome, 1995.

<sup>65</sup> E. Cassirer, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*, trans. from the original German version of 1927, Oxford, 1963; Philadelphia, 1972; Chicago, 2010, chapter 3: 73–122.



Fig. 100. Andrea Mantegna, *Calumnia of Apelles*, monochrome drawing, ca. 1504–06, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig. 101. Giovanni Mocetto, *Calumnia of Apelles*, engraving, after 1494, University of Michigan Museum of Art, Museum Purchase 1968/1/122.

*remediis utriusque fortuna*, with its “new orientation of faith” and concluding with Giordano Bruno’s *Spaccio della bestia trionfante* (1584), Cassirer demonstrated “a process similar to the one traceable in the transformations undergone by Fortune in the visual arts”.<sup>66</sup> He discusses, among others, the contributions of Lorenzo Valla’s *De libero arbitrio* (1436), Gianozzo Manetti’s *De dignitate et excellentia hominis* (1452), Pico della Mirandola’s *Oratione de hominis dignitate* and Pomponazzi’s *De fato, libero arbitrio et predestinazione* (1520s), each of which dealt with aspects of free-will, self-affirmation and the taming of destiny. But these writings did not emphasize the passage of time or express the need to command propitious moments.

Perhaps because of its philological orientation Cassirer neglected to discuss Angelo Poliziano’s Latin poem on *Kairos* that was based on Ausonius (1498). Nor did Cassirer mention the proverb *Nosce tempus* (Consider the due time), a Latin version of the Ausonian epigram taken from the *Anthologia graeca*, which was published by Erasmus in his *Adagia* (1508) and translated by Alciati for his *Occasio* emblem (1531).<sup>67</sup> These humanist scholars, devoted to the revival of Greek and Latin literature, philology and moralistic allegory were instrumental in recovering the Greek ekphrastic image of *Kairos* alongside of the Latin *Fortuna*. Actually, the two concepts would remain distinct until the idea of temporal transience and its remedies became the common denominator for both.

Attempts to explain developments of Fortuna’s iconography in the context of contemporary socio-political events have also revealed the trajectory towards *Cinquecento* political propaganda. Mario Santoro claimed that the theme of Fortune was renewed in *Cinquecento* literature as a reflection of a new socio-political reality and the need to reassess options for self-direction.<sup>68</sup> The last years of the *Quattrocento* had initiated a period of crisis and uncertainty in Italy, characterized by Guiccardini as one of “*innumerabili e orribili calamità*”, and lamented by the foremost chroniclers and humanists, such as Bernardo Rucellai, Giovanni Pontano and Sigismondo de’ Conti, during the first decade of the sixteenth century.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Cassirer (as above), 75.

<sup>67</sup> *Anthologia graeca* 16. 275 (see note 9); Erasmus, *Adagia* 670.

<sup>68</sup> M. Santoro, *Fortuna, ragione e prudenza nella civiltà letteraria del Cinquecento*, Napoli, 1966, 1978, 15–25.

<sup>69</sup> Francesco Guicciardini, *Storia d’Italia*, I, vi. On the French invasion and the theme of Fortuna, see Santoro (as above).



According to Santoro, the critical period began in 1494 with the French invasion of Italy and the concurrent overthrow of Medici rule that initiated socio-political transformations in Florence, first under Savonarola, then under a republican government, and finally by the Medici return to power. Santoro assumed that men were questioning the validity of traditional beliefs due to an overbearing sense of insecurity and transience?<sup>70</sup> Is this assumption applicable to the revival of *Kairos/Occasio* first as a literary, ethical concept and subsequently as an allegorical image? We might take into consideration that there was a pre-Renaissance visual tradition of the *Kairos* allegory, as demonstrated by the Torcello relief. In other words, one may question the *a priori* assignation of the theme to socio-political events, while taking into account its adoption in moral contexts.

The most famous application of the *Occasio* theme to early *Cinquecento* political propaganda was that of Niccolo Machiavelli. Santoro believed that Machiavelli's polemical attitude towards traditional culture was rooted in these years of crisis. Following the collapse of the Florentine republic and the reinstating of Medici rule in 1512, Machiavelli wrote the following poem on *Occasio*, based on the epigram of Ausonius:

Who are you, lady of no mortal mien,  
 Endowed by Heaven with such a lofty air?  
 Why winged feet? Why are you never seen at rest?  
 I am *Occasion*, sparse and rare  
 are my acquaintance, and I'm ill at ease  
 From standing with one foot upon a sphere.  
 My flight is swift as any fitful breeze;  
 Wings on my feet sustain me in the air,  
 So when I pass nobody really sees.  
 Low on my brow before me spreads my hair,  
 So that it covers all my breast and face,  
 Thus, no one knows me, coming, till I'm there.  
 Of hair behind my head there's not a trace,  
 Hence one I've turned against, or hurried by,  
 Can never catch me: it's no good to try.  
 Tell me then: who's this person by your side?  
 She's *Penitence*; and this you'd better note,  
 Who misses me she gets to be his bride.  
 And you who stand there talking, you who dote

<sup>70</sup> Santoro (as in note 68), 23–25. For a review of other approaches and interpretations, see F. Buttay-Jutier, *Fortuna: usages politiques d'une allégorie morale à la Renaissance*, Paris, 2008.



On idle chatter, while the hour lingers,  
 Wise up a bit, you klutz, you missed the boat,  
 And I've already slipped between your fingers.<sup>71</sup>

In other references to the dangers and destruction of *Fortuna*, set forth in *The Prince* (c. 1513), Machiavelli adopted the metaphor of a man facing the unexpected fury of a river, a theme that was previously illustrated in a Florentine engraving of the *Trionfo del Tempo*, from a *Trionfi* a series dated to 1460–70 (Fig. 52).<sup>72</sup> The literary metaphor of temporal flux conceived as an ever-flowing river is at least as old as the 5th c. B.C. when, according to tradition, Heraclitus coined the saying “*You cannot step twice into the same river for fresh waters are ever flowing in on you*”.<sup>73</sup> Machiavelli’s metaphor reflects the Greek philosophical conception of time as a function of motion, derives from associations of *Fortuna* with the sea and ships in classical literature and philosophy, relates to the etymological relationship of the terms *fortuna* and *tempesta*, and seems to parody more recent Christian metaphors of temporality.<sup>74</sup> Following early Christian precedents, the sea metaphor was used by mendicant preachers in the *Trecento* as an image of temporality—a condition of moral temptation and peril from which one is rescued through penance by, what the Dominican preacher Jacopo Passavant called “*una navicella lieve e salda*”

<sup>71</sup> “Dell’Occasione—Chi se’ tu, che non par’ donna mortale, di tanta grazia el ciel t’adorna e dota? Perché non posi? E perché a’ piedi hai l’ali?—Io son l’Occasione, a pochi nota, e la cagion che sempre mi travagli, è perch’io tengo un piè sopra una rota. Volar non è ch’al mio correr s’agguagli; e però l’ali a’ piedi mi mantengo, acciò nel corso mio ciascuno abbagli. Li sparsi mia capei dinanti io tengo; con essi mi ricuopro il petto e l’vólto. Perch’un non mi conosca quando io vengo. Drieto dal capo ogni capel m’è tolto, onde invan s’affatica un, se gli avviene ch’i’ l’abbi trapassato, o s’i’ mi vólto.—Dimmi: chi è colei che teco viene?—È Penitenza; e però nota e intendi: Chi non sa prender me, costei ritiene. E tu, mentre parlando il tempo spendi, occupato da molti pensier vani, già non t’avvedi, lasso! e non comprendi com’io ti son fuggita tra le mani.” Niccolò Machiavelli, *Opere litterarie*, ed. Luigi Blasucci, Milano, 1964, 325; Niccolò Macchiavelli, *The Prince*, English translation by Robert M. Adams, New York, 1977, 138.

<sup>72</sup> This is part of a series of the six engraved *Trionfi*.

<sup>73</sup> See G.S. Kirk, *Heraclitus, The Cosmic Fragments*, Cambridge, 1954, fr. 41.

<sup>74</sup> This issue is discussed and illustrated by Kiefer (as in note 59), 3–21. The most popular late Roman source was that of Ovid, who wrote: “since I have set sail upon a wide ocean, and spread my canvas to the wind, let me continue further. Nothing is constant in the whole world. Everything is in a state of flux, and comes into being as transient appearance. Time itself flows on with constant motion, just like a river: for no more than a river can a fleeting hour stand still. As wave is driven on by wave, and itself pusued, pursues the one before, so the moments of time at once flee and follow, and are ever new. What was before is left behind, that which was not comes to be and every minute gives place to another.” *Metamorphoses*, XV, lines 178–190, trans. Mary N. Innes, *Ovid, Metamorphoses*, Harmondsworth, 1974, 339.

(a light and steadfast ship)—the eternal permanence of the church.<sup>75</sup> In Machiavelli's satirical and pragmatic recapitulation of the theme, Penance, no longer the medium of spiritual redemption, has been ironically cast as an image of the procrastinator's repentance.

The appearance of *Fortuna* with the forelock of *Kairos/Occasio*, standing on a ship in Giovanni Rucellai's *impresa*, demonstrates the early conflation of the two personifications.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, it would probably have been perceived to convey the Dominican conceptions referred to above, considering Rucellai's Dominican ties and his patronage of the Santa Maria Novella facade.

Soon after the appearance of Rucellai's *impresa*, an anonymous Florentine engraver depicted a nude male figure on a ship, repeating the stance of *Fortuna* seen on Rucellai's *impresa* (Fig. 102).<sup>77</sup> A stylish woman seated in the keel reaches out to grasp his elusive body as the ship is rocked by the winds. Thus the iconography of *Fortuna*, still associated with the male *Kairos*, was adapted to an allegory of elusive or unobtainable love. Such examples demonstrate that there were no clearly defined borders to differentiate between the concepts of *Fortuna* and *Occasio* and to distinguish their artistic expressions during the transitional period of the later *Quattrocento*. This is attributable to the fluidity of the concepts, their modifications in varying contexts, and the resulting iconographic expressions that were neither uniform nor static. The conflation of these concepts has been repeatedly underlined in the literature. Nevertheless, we see, for example, that certain elements, such as the river metaphor and marine attributes were not adopted to describe *Occasio*. It is significant that, despite the tendency to conflate some elements of *Kairos* with *Fortuna*, the tenacious image of the fleeing moment would ultimately be revived, embodying its authentic classical form and meaning in art of the mid *Cinquecento*. Several decades were yet to pass till then, during which time facets of *kairos/Occasio* would evolve in different literary and artistic directions.

<sup>75</sup> See T. Kircher, "The Sea as an Image of Temporality Among Tuscan Dominicans and Humanists in the Fourteenth Century," in G. Jaritz & G. Moreno-Riaño (eds.), *Time and Eternity, The Medieval Discourse, Turnhout*, 2003, 283–94.

<sup>76</sup> This *impresa* was first presented as a prototype by Aby Warburg, (1907) 2003 (as in note 59), 167–97. See Kiefer (as in note 59), 3–7 & fig. 1, and Buttay-Jutier (as in note 70), fig. 3 & 88–94, for a review of the bibliography on this subject.

<sup>77</sup> Buttay-Jutier (as in note 70), fig. 1. For other examples, see A. Doren, "Fortuna im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance," *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg*, 2, 1922/1923, 71–144.



Fig. 102. *Occasio/Kairos*, anonymous Florentine engraving, ca. 1460–70, B.R. 352, fol. 1, Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale.



Fig. 103. Medal of Giovanni Maria del Monte, attributed to Giovanni Zacchi, ca. 1535.

## Occasio and the Fata Morgana

A curious literary adaptation of the *Kairos* conception and its motto was interwoven into the tale of *Orlando Innamorato*, written by Matteo Maria Boiardo in 1483 for his Estense patrons at the court of Ferrara. In a recycling of an Arthurian type romance of Celtic origin, Boiardo introduced the classical leitmotif of the favorable moment that has not been utilized and must be pursued. The contemporary poem by Angelo Poliziano may have introduced Boiardo to the classical concept of opportune time and to the ekphrastic image of *Kairos/Occasio* with the forelock. In 1893 John E. Matzke was the first to demonstrate the connection between Boiardo's episode and the Italian idiom *tener la fortuna per ciuffetta*.<sup>78</sup> Here the volatile figure with the forelock—*lei tutti I crini avea sopra la fronte*, has been transformed into the fairy Morgain, *Fata Morgana* in Italian.<sup>79</sup> She is pursued by the hero Orlando, who has missed an opportunity and hastens to seize her by the hair, but is too late. He comes upon a door with the inscription: *Sappi che quivi facile è l'entrata, ma il risalir dappoi non è leggiero, A cui non prende quella buona fata, Che sempre fugge intorno il piano e'l monte, E dietro è calv, e' crin ha solo in fronte* (ii–viii, 39).<sup>80</sup> Subsequently we read: *Non seppe Orlando al ciuffo dar il mano, Ed or la segue per deserto invano*, and then a pale, thin and flagellant Penitence introduces herself: *Io sono Penitenza, D'ogni diletto e d'allegrezza cassa, e sempre seguo chi ventura lassa*.<sup>81</sup> It is notable that the medieval conceptions of penance and self-castigation, still represented by Boiardo's literary personification of *Penitenza*, would lose their popularity in secular allegories of the sixteenth century, while future-oriented allegories related to *Temperanza*, *Fortuna* and *Nemesis* gained precedence in art. As always, there are exceptions. Among these we might note Leonbruno's *Calumnia of Apelles* (also called *Allegoria del Governo della Fortuna*, ca. 1525–30), where *Penitenza*, with lowered and veiled head, torn vestments and shackles, retains her miserable aspect.

<sup>78</sup> John E. Matzke, (as in note 2) 303–334, esp. 322–24.

<sup>79</sup> For the connection of the *fata morgana* with the optical phenomenon of mirage, see *Op. cit.*, 321.

<sup>80</sup> "Know that the entrance is easy, but the re-ascent afterwards is not a light matter. Therefore don't take this good fairy, who always flees about on plain and mountain. And behind she is bald and has a forelock only in front." (author's trans.).

<sup>81</sup> "Orlando could not grasp the forelock in his hand, and now he follows her to the desert in vain . . . I am penance, destroyer of every delight and joy, and I always follow those who miss their chance."



*Modifications of Kairos/Occasio in Painting and Emblems*

A unique representation in late *Quattrocento* Venetian art illustrates the merging of *Kairos/Occasio* with attributes of *Nemesis*, the Greek goddess of retribution (Fig. 104). The small painted *Allegory* (ca. 1490–1501), generally attributed to Giovanni Bellini or to his disciple Andrea Previtali, was formerly presumed to be part of a *restello*,<sup>82</sup> mentioned in Vincenzo Catena's will in 1525 (Fig. 105).<sup>83</sup> When the complex passed from the Contarini collection to the Galleria dell'Accademia in 1838, it included this fifth panel, differing in style and size from the other four, which may or may not have been part of the original *restello*. Interpretations of the four allegories by Giovanni Bellini are controversial and there are tendencies to view them as juxtaposed virtues and vices (or sins). It is tentatively suggested here that they represent original variations on the conventional iconography of *Gula*, *Accidia* (*Melancholia*), *Vanitas* and *Invidia* (*Luxuria*), sins that might be associated with a well-endowed lady of leisure who tends to admire her opulent reflection.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>82</sup> A '*restello da camera*' is a piece of furniture that is often mentioned in Renaissance inventories, defined in the early 20th c. by Gustav Ludwig as a "combination of mirror and row of pegs for hanging up objects": *Venezianischer Hausrat zur Zeit der Renaissance: Einleitung und Abhandlung über das Restello / unter Mitwirkung Fritz Rintelens von Gustav Ludwig. Mit einem Nachruf an den Verfasser von Wilhelm Bode*, Berlin, 1906. He was the first to suggest that the five small panels, assumedly by Giovanni Bellini, must have been originally intended for just such a piece of domestic furniture. With the help of photomontages he proposed a hypothetical reconstruction of how they might have been incorporated into it. His argument has been generally accepted.

<sup>83</sup> For bibliography dealing with the Bellini allegories and the '*Nemesis*' panel, see Anchise Tempestini, *Giovanni Bellini*, Milano, 2000, 124–26. The four allegories are a different size (32 or 34 × 22 each) than the *Nemesis* (27 × 19 cm.), and in recent years the panel has been attributed by most authors to another hand and/or complex.

<sup>84</sup> See Claudia Cieri Via, "Allegorie morali dalla bottega belliniana," in *Giorgione e la Cultura Veneta tra '400 e '500*, Atti 1978; Roma, 1981, 126–45. According to my interpretation, *Gula* is represented by the chariot of Bacchus bearing fruit, based on a sketch by Jacopo Bellini (1450). *Accidia* appears to be conflated with *Melancholia*, a combination frequently illustrated: e.g. two paintings of the theme by Lucas Cranach, in the Copenhagen Statens Museum for Kunst (1532) and Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar (1553); see also R. Klibansky, F. Saxl and E. Panofsky, *Saturn and Melancholy*, New York, 1964, 221, 300–302, 335, figs. 91–94, 96, 113, 128 & 129 and S.W. Jackson, "Acedia the Sin and its Relationship to Sorrow and Melancholia," in A. Kleinman and G. Byron (eds.), *Culture and Depression: Studies in the Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Psychiatry of Affect and Disorder*, Berkeley, 1985, 45–61. Bellini's *Vanitas* has the classic attributes of this theme, depicted primarily in Flemish art, as in Hans Memling's *Triptych of Vanity and Salvation* (1485). From the early 14th century *Invidia* was symbolized by a female personification attacked by one or more serpents. In Giotto's personification of the Cappella Arena, Padua (1305) the serpentine venom of the envious female is also shown to backfire. In Ovid's description (Met. II, 770–80), *Invidia*



Fig. 104. *Occasio/Kairos/Nemesis*, Attributed to Giovanni Bellini or Andrea Previtali, ca. 1490–1501, Venice, Galleria dell'Accademia.

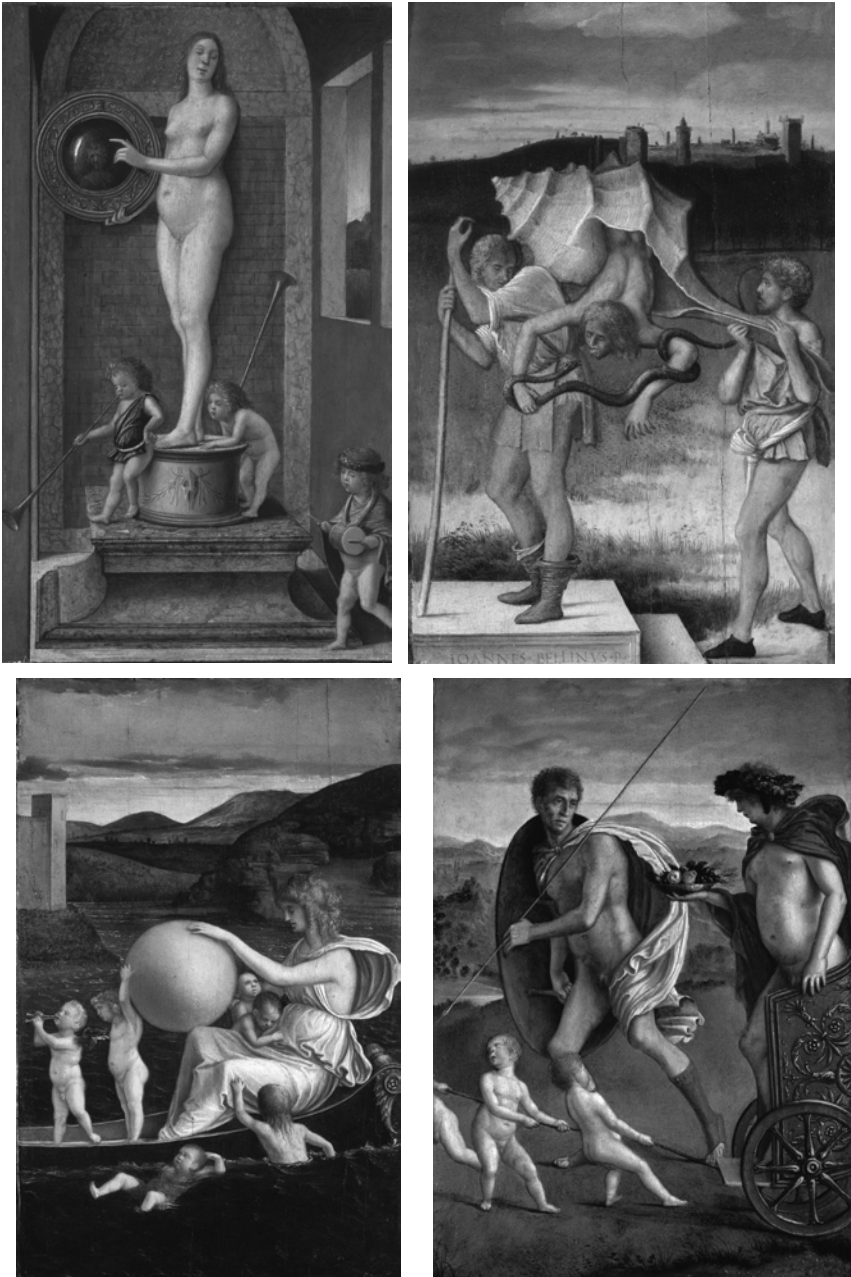


Fig. 105. Giovanni Bellini, *Four Allegories from a restello*, ca. 1490–1501, Venice, Galleria dell'Accademia.

The problematic figure of the fifth panel retains the forelock and wings of *Kairos*; the two wheels commonly depicted below the feet are here converted to round balls. The bound eyes of the female personification illustrate the metaphor of blindness. A blindfolded figure has evil connotations in medieval art, associated with ignorance, the heretic *Synagoga*, indiscriminate Cupid (whose arrows are the source of amorous irrationality), the arbitrary cruelty of Death, and *caeca Fortuna*, so-called from classical times.<sup>85</sup> A pair of vases held by this personification represents good and bad retribution, which was associated in the Renaissance with both *Nemesis* and *Fortuna*. A curious precedent for this motif is found in the French illumination (ca. 1400) previously discussed, where a winged and tricephalous female called '*Temps*', standing on the wheel of Fortune, pours *douceurs* (sweets) and *desereune* (misfortune) from two inverted vases (Fig. 23).<sup>86</sup> Inscribed in her wings are the months; the three heads are identified as past, present and future (tripartite time). This angelic figure of '*Temps*' is contrasted with the semi-nude *Fortuna* who supports the wheel from below. '*Temps*' is identified with '*Mere Nature*', the maternal concept of cosmic order, and it is of no small significance that *douceurs* and *desereune*, gifts and misfortunes, are dispensed not by Fortune but by Time.

The two vases held by the hybrid figure in the panel painting are also related to the iconography of *Temperantia*. The Latin word was derived from *tempus*—one of the Roman terms used to describe a proper time or season. In Judeo-Christian tradition this meaning was derived from the Old Testament use of the Hebrew *Eth* (cf. *Kairos*) to denote the appointed time, or season fit for an activity or event.<sup>87</sup> In late medieval art a pitcher

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(from *videt intus*) signifies "looking into", denoting that by looking she is wasted away. The gender of Bellini's figure is not clear, but it emerges from a sea-shell, which is symbolic of the vagina in Renaissance allegories. While the serpent of *Invidia* has a tongue of venom ("*lingua est suffusa veneno*," Ovid, *Loc. cit.*), in a gender context the serpent would also be phallic, thus suggesting that this also might be conceived as an allegory of lust (*Luxuria*).

<sup>85</sup> See E. Panofsky, "Blind Cupid," *Studies in Iconology*, New York, Evanston, San Francisco, (Oxford, 1939) London, 1962, 95–128.

<sup>86</sup> See Part I, Chapter Four.

<sup>87</sup> "There is an appointed time (*zman*) for everything. And there is a time (*'êth*) for every event under heaven—

A time (*'êth*) to give birth, and a time to die; A time to plant, and a time to uproot what is planted.

A time to kill, and a time to heal; A time to tear down, and a time to build up.

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; A time to mourn, and a time to dance.

A time to throw stones, and a time to gather stones; A time to embrace, and a time to shun embracing.

and a bowl used for diluting wine were attributes of *Temperantia* as symbols of moderation. They are replaced here by two identical receptacles as also seen in popular art of the *Quattrocento*, such as the *tarocchi* (tarot cards).

The eclectic character of the Venetian figure precludes any stereotyped interpretation. The monstrous hybridization, combining leonine feet of the sphinx (literally strangler in Greek) with the avian iconography of the harpy (from the Greek *arpázo-* to seize), introduces negative connotations that are unprecedented in personifications of *Kairos*, *Occasio* or *Fortuna*. Half female and half bestial, such demonic hybrids were associated with the worst vices, cruelty and threats of feminine sexuality.<sup>88</sup> Considering that they rarely conveyed positive concepts, how are we to interpret this hybridization?

It should be noted that the classical goddess of divine retribution, *Nemesis*, underwent several transformations. In classical Greek sculpture she was worshipped as an ideal beauty related to Aphrodite and was often accompanied by the wheel and the winged griffon. She was sometimes depicted trampling *Adika* (injustice).<sup>89</sup> A hybrid form of *Nemesis* was known in lower Egypt, as represented by a limestone stele relief where

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A time to search, and a time to give up as lost; A time to keep, and a time to throw away.

A time to tear apart, and a time to sew together; A time to be silent, and a time to speak.

A time to love, and a time to hate; A time for war, and a time for peace.”—*Ecclesiastes* 3:1–8.

<sup>88</sup> See S. Cohen, “Andrea del Sarto’s Madonna of the Harpies and the Human-Animal Hybrid of the Renaissance,” in *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*, Leiden, 2008, 241–62.

<sup>89</sup> See e.g. a marble statue of *Nemesis* from Egypt, 2nd c., in the Louvre, Paris, where she tramples a small figure of *Adika* and a 2nd century Greek statue from Perge, the Antalya Museum, Turkey, where she is accompanied by a winged griffon: <http://www.ancientsculpturegallery.com/sitebuilder/images/1-0034-Nemesis-from-Perge>. A late classical limestone relief of a male warrior in armor trampling a female (Cairo Museum, 3rd c. A.D.), was illustrated by Cook (as in note 4), 863, fig. 801, who recognized it as the figure of *Nemesis* influenced by that of *Kairos*. The figure holds the wheel of *Nemesis* and is trampling *Adika*, as in the Louvre *Nemesis*, but the minute scales at his side and the mourning *Metanoia* behind are derived from *Kairos* imagery. The *Nemesis* identification was first put forth by Lamer, ‘Kairos’, in August Pauly, Georg Wissowa, Wilhelm Kroll, Kurt Witte, Karl Mittelhaus, Konrat Ziegler, eds. *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft: neue Bearbeitung*, Stuttgart, 1894–1980, X, 1508–1521. An English edition, *Brill’s New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World*, was published in Leiden, 2006, with a chronological supplement in 2007. Mattiacci (as in note 3, 146, fig. 4), incorrectly identified the armed figure as *Kairos*. The male or female warrior form of *Nemesis* was worshipped by victorious generals in imperial times and was considered the protector of gladiators and venators.



she has three heads (the parts of time?), female breasts and a leonine body.<sup>90</sup> Could this form have inspired the painting? This appears unlikely for several reasons. There seems to be no evidence that the hybrid form of *Nemesis* was known in Renaissance Italy. Classical references in Greek sources described her only as a virginal goddess and occasionally mentioned that she carried attributes, such as a crown, apple branch or cup. Pausanias even stated that ancient statues of *Nemesis* did not have wings, but that later artists gave her wings as they did to Eros.<sup>91</sup> The winged *Nemesis* was probably known to the Renaissance from her numerous depictions on Roman coins, especially those of the imperial period. This line of evidence must inevitably raise doubts regarding the identification of the creature as *Nemesis*. Is it then an image of *Kairos*, *Fortuna* and *Nemesis* combined? I suggest that there is one additional association that has not been previously considered.

About thirty years after the small panel was painted in Venice, Andrea Alciato published the first edition of his *Emblematum Liber* (Augsburg, 1531) with a female hybrid illustrating the emblem *Submovendam Ignorantiam* (Ignorance must be done away with) (Fig. 106). The text explains her virginal face, bird's wings and lion legs as the form of *Ignorance*—a great evil illustrated by the enigma of the sphinx. The earliest woodcut illustration shows the virginal face, female torso and lion legs but adds a curly forelock, all of which find correspondence in the panel painting. A blindfold further underscores her ignorance. Assuming that the painting was part of a *restello*, we may surmise that the message was addressed to a female viewer whose ignorance might cause her to miss passing opportunities. Thus it could be perceived either as a satire on feminine frivolity and ignorance (or innocence) or a moralization meant to challenge a woman, as she regarded her reflection in the mirror, to grasp time by the forelock. These interpretations might not be mutually exclusive.

The famous allegory of *Nemesis* by Albrecht Dürer (Fig. 107) was probably engraved following his first visit to Venice in 1494–95. The effect of his two Italian journeys, influences of Venetian art on Dürer, and the famous expression of his admiration for Giovanni Bellini contained in a

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<sup>90</sup> This limestone stele (43 × 48 cm.) is in the Biblioteca Alexandrina, Antiquities Museum, Alexandria; see online: <http://bibalex.org/Attachments/Photos/Big/00157284-0001.jpg>

<sup>91</sup> Among the many classical sources for *Nemesis* are: Hesiod, *Theogony*, 211ff; Cicero, *De natura deorum*, 3.A; Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 7.5.3 and Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, 10.24 ff.



Fig. 106. *Submovendam Ignorantiam*, from Alciato, *Emblematum Liber*, Augsburg, 1531, C3v.

letter to Willibad Pirckheimer (1506), have been widely discussed in the literature.<sup>92</sup> It is possible that he saw the little painting and was inspired by the winged personification and its lovely landscape. But the panel figure is earthbound, while Dürer's hovers above as if were pervading the world. Panofsky suggested that Dürer's literary source was a passage from the Latin poem *Manto* composed by the Florentine humanist Angelo Poliziano, who, not incidentally, was connected to Lorenzo de' Medici and the Medici court. Poliziano's well informed description, written in the 1480s and first published in 1498, included an explanation of the epigram by Ausonius describing the image of "*Occasione*" by Lysippus, and stating

<sup>92</sup> See E. Panofsky, *Albrecht Dürer*, Princeton, 1943; Fritz Koreny, "Venice and Dürer," in Bernard Aikema & Beverly Louise Brown (eds.), *Renaissance Venice and the North*, Venice, 1999, 240–331 and Katherine Crawford Lubet, *Albrecht Dürer and the Venetian Renaissance*, Cambridge (UK), 2005.



Fig. 107. Albrecht Dürer, *Nemesis*, engraving, ca. 1501–03, London, British Museum.

that it was called by the Greeks "*Kairos*" and was mistakenly attributed to Phidias.<sup>93</sup>

An epigram from the *Anthologia graeca*, which connects *Nemesis* with justice and moderation and also refers to the bridle, might have been known to Dürer. The artist himself referred later to this figure as *Nemesis*.<sup>94</sup> The haughty, smiling figure in the engraving retains the wings and forelock of *Kairos*, but stands on one round ball, like *Occasio*. In her lowered left hand she holds the reins and bit, equestrian attributes of *Temperantia* denoting restraint, and proffers a precious gold vessel on the right. References to the dimension of time in Dürer's print are transmitted in the concept of *Kairos*, on one hand, and that of *Temperantia*, on the other.<sup>95</sup> Thirty years later we find an emblematic version of this iconography in Alciati's *Emblemata liber*, where the epigram from the *Anthologia graeca*, mentioned above, is illustrated by the winged goddess standing on a large wheel, her right hand pointing to heaven (i.e. divine justice) and the left holding reins (Fig. 108). Although there is no mention of time, *Nemesis* is seen with the tell-tale forelock.

Alciati's emblem titled *In Occasionem* (Augsburg, 1531) constitutes a kind of milestone in the history of this image, primarily since it was accompanied by a Latin translation of the *Anthologia Graeca* text, based on the *Kairos* epigram by Posidippos (3rd c. B.C.). The allegory of *Kairos/Occasio* was thus reinstated with its textual source. However, Alciati did not restore the classical male image, but chose to perpetuate the female version of *Occasio*, conflated with *Fortuna* bearing marine attributes. Furthermore, in his earliest emblem entitled *In Occasionem* the accompanying text was not faithfully illustrated. She was said to have a razor in her right hand and winged sandals on her feet, attributes which were not to be seen

<sup>93</sup> "Ausoni poetae celebre est epigrama, quo simulachrum describitur Occasionis. Nam sic utique; deus, quem Graeci kairon appellant, interpretatus est. Se denique longe miror, quid ita Phidiae tribuerit, quod erat Lysippi. Extat adhuc enim Posidippi Graecum comparis argumenti, de quo sum finxerunt Ausonius, quanquam in Graeco Lysippus Sicyonius artifex, in Latino Phidia perhibetur." Poliziano, *Miscellaneorum centuria prima*, Lyon, 1528, 578–79. The entire passage is quoted by Paolozzi Strozzi & Schwarzenberg (as in note 32), 311 & 315, note 13.

<sup>94</sup> Panofsky, *Albrecht Dürer* (as in note 92), II, 81–82, 261–62. See the poem *Manto* in Angelo Poliziano, *Silvae*, edited and translated by Charles Fantazzi, Cambridge (Mass.), 2004, 2–29.

<sup>95</sup> See Lynn Townsend White, "The Iconography of Temperantia and the Virtuousness of Technology," in *Medieval Religion and Technology: Collected Essays*, U. of Ca. Press, 1978, 181–204 (reprinted from Theodore K. Rabb & Jerrold E. Seigel (eds.), *Action and Conviction in Early Modern Europe, Essays in Memory of E.H. Harbison*, Princeton, 1969, 197–219).





Fig. 108. *Nec Verbo Nec Facto* ("neither by word or deed"), figure of *Nemesis*, Alciati, *Emblematum Liber*, Augsburg, 1531, A7r.





Fig. 109. *In Occasionem*, Alciati, *Emblematum Liber*, Augsburg, 1531, A8r.

in Alciati's first *Occasio* print (Augsburg, 1531) (Fig. 109), although it did appear in subsequent editions. The initial disjunction between the text and contemporary illustration may be attributed to the fact that Alciati himself authorized but did not invent illustrations for the 1531 issue of the *Emblemata*. Having furthered his career as a jurist in Avignon (from 1518) and then in Bourges (1529–34), he was surely aware of *Fortuna's* popularity in early sixteenth century France.

These allegories of temporality were among the precedents that evolved into mid *Cinquecento* propagandist allegories of time. They would restore *Kairos* to his former glory, as he obtained monumental proportions in the grandiose iconographic programs of Cosimo I de' Medici.



## CHAPTER NINE

### VERITAS FILIA TEMPORIS: TIME IN CINQUECENTO PROPAGANDA

#### *Early Renaissance Precedents*

The revival of time imagery in Renaissance sovereign propaganda was inspired by the paradigms of Roman imperial iconography. The process began in the *Quattrocento*, primarily with stock leitmotifs in heraldic contexts, and reached a peak in classically oriented programs of the *Cinquecento*. A salient example is that of the Medici rulers, who utilized images of cyclic renewal and regeneration to emphasize the continuity of their dynastic rule and to proclaim their promotion of a peaceful and prosperous Golden Age. Their early imagery included emblematic time-related themes with mottos, such as SEMPER and GLOVIS (*si volge*), and visual motifs, like the *broncone*, the diamond ring and the laurel.<sup>1</sup>

Cyclic images, such as those of Seasons and Months, with a long and continuous tradition in manuscript illumination, sculpture, mosaics and monumental painting, were perpetuated in wall paintings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Astrological imagery, related to the sovereign's horoscope and/or symbolically alluding to the prosperity and benevolence of his reign, had been adopted in fifteenth century monumental programs. An early example was that of Cosimo il Vecchio in the *Sagrestia Vecchia* at San Lorenzo (1419), followed by numerous examples in northern Italy. The vault of the *Camera di Griselda* from Roccabianca (1458–64), the *Salone dei Mesi* in the Palazzo Schifanoia, Ferrara (ca. 1470), Peruzzi's *Sala di Galatea* in the Villa Farnesina (1511), the *Camera dello Zodiaco* ceiling in the Castello di San Giorgio, Mantua (ca. 1519–22), and the *Sala dei Venti*, Mantua (ca. 1526), have been perceived to convey messages based

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<sup>1</sup> The classical and exemplary work on this subject is Janet Cox Rearick's *Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art: Pontormo, Leo X and the two Cosimos*, Princeton, 1984. See also Ames-Lewis, F., "Early Medicean Devices," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XLII, 1979, 122–43 and *Le Temps Revient, 'L Tempo si Rinnova; Feste e Spettacoli nella Firenze di Lorenzo Il Magnifico*, a cura di Paola Ventrone, (Firenze, Palazzo Medici Riccardi, 1992), Milano, 1992.

on the patron's horoscope.<sup>2</sup> These astrological programs were derived primarily from classical and medieval manuscripts and incunabula, where planets and constellations were traditionally represented by mythological figures. The iconography was basically anachronistic and perpetuated conceptual and formal precedents. Furthermore, the programs were astrologically oriented; in other words they attempted to chart an event in its spatial-temporal context, not unlike the ecclesiastical calendars that charted events of sacred history and Church festivals. Thus the emphasis was on the event, not on the duration of time. The astronomical charting of planets and constellations was based on heavenly cycles, "a moving image of Eternity";<sup>3</sup> unrelated to ontological expressions of temporal irreversibility and destruction.

### *Cinquecento Innovations: Michelangelo and Pontormo*

Throughout the *Cinquecento* the iconography of time and temporality was constantly augmented by new and more complex imagery that was charged with moral, intellectual and practical connotations in unprecedented contexts. Personifications of temporal periods, such as Michelangelo's *Times of Day* in the Medici Chapel (1520–34), created in a sepulchral, commemorative context (Figs. 110 & 111),<sup>4</sup> or Pontormo's mythological

<sup>2</sup> Literary sources and functions of these astrological programs have been studied by Kristen Lippincott, as in the following: "The Astrological Decoration of the Sala dei Venti in the Palazzo del Te," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. XLVII, 1984, 215–22; "The Astrological Vault of the 'Camera di Griselda' from Roccabianca," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. XLVIII, 1985, 216–22; "Gli affreschi del Salone dei Mesi e il problema dell'attribuzione," in R. Varese (ed.) (Istituto di Studi rinascimentali), *Atlante di Schifanoia*, Modena, 1989, 11–39; "The Iconography of the 'Salone dei Mesi' and the Study of Latin Grammar in Fifteenth Century Ferrara," in M. Pade, L. Waage Peterson & D. Quarto (eds.), *La Corte di Ferrara e il suo mecenatismo*, Modena, 1990, 93–109; "Two Astrological Ceilings Reconsidered: the Sala di Galatea in the Villa Farnesina and the Sala del Mappamondo at Caprarola," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. LIII, 1990, 185–207; K. Lippincott & Rodolfo Signorini, "The Camera dello Zodiaco of Federico II Gonzaga," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. LIV, 1991, 244–47. See also Mary Quinlan McGrath, "The Villa Farnesina, Time-Telling Conventions and Renaissance Astrological Practice," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 58, 1995, 52–71.

<sup>3</sup> Plato, *Timaeus*, 37d–e. The sphere of the fixed stars constitutes a cosmic clock, whose uniform rotation is characterized by its irreversibility. See John Spenser Hill, *Infinity, Faith, and Time; Christian Humanism and Renaissance Literature*, Montreal, 1997, esp. 69–77.

<sup>4</sup> See Edith Balas, *Michelangelo's Medici Chapel: A New Interpretation*, Philadelphia, 1995 and James Beck, Antonio Paolucci & Bruno Santi, *Michelangelo, The Medici Chapel*, London & New York, 2000.

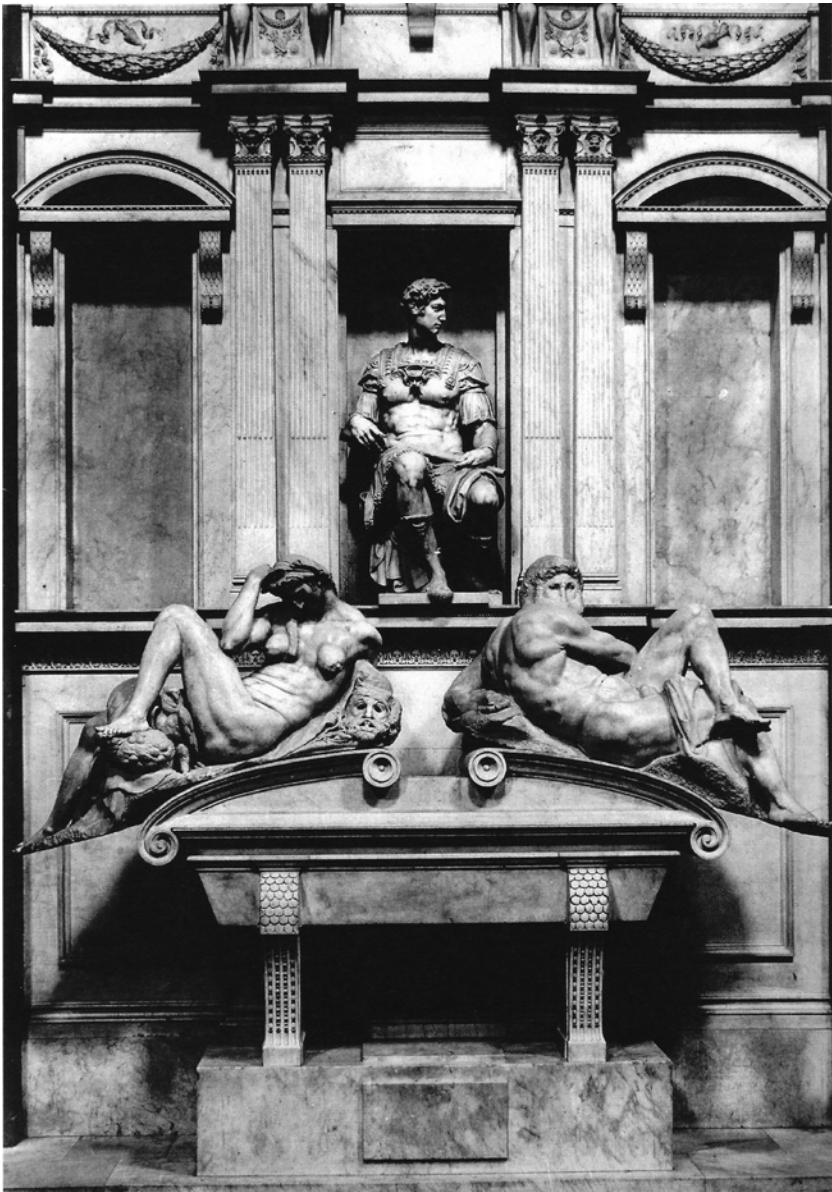


Fig. 110. Michelangelo, *Notte and Giorno* (detail), Florence, Church of San Lorenzo, Cappella Medici, 1520–34.





Fig. 111. Michelangelo, *Aurora* (detail), Florence, Church of San Lorenzo, Cappella Medici, 1520–1534. Author's photo.

representations of the seasons at the Medici villa in Poggio a Caiano (Fig. 112) demonstrate how traditional cyclic motifs, newly interpreted through classically inspired forms and/or content, could be adapted in varied ways to dynastic panegyrics.

Michelangelo reinterpreted the theme of cyclic time by creating figures that assumed the semblance of classical sculpture but ignored classical and medieval precedents for the representations of *Aurora*, *Crepuscolo*, *Giorno* and *Notte*.<sup>5</sup> Cyclic motifs in Medici propaganda were traditionally adopted to symbolize dynastic continuity, but the temporal personifications of the *Cappella Medici* assumed the function of mourners, expressing the tragedy of death in a temporal world. Obviously these statues should be viewed in the context of the complete iconographical program, which would include the unfinished parts of the ducal tombs, and the unexecuted *Magnifici* tombs. The controversial interpretations of the chapel program are beyond the scope of this chapter,<sup>6</sup> but we may conclude, both from the dolorous images themselves, and from the writings of Michelangelo and contemporaries, that the *Times of Day* were intended to portray the destructive power of time, reflecting the negative conceptions of temporality in medieval speculation and the pessimism of proto-Renaissance literary works, such as Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo*. In a poem written by the artist during his work on the chapel, *Di* and *Notte* confess their contribution to Giuliano's premature death:

*El Di e la nocte parlano e dicono; Noi abbiàno chol nostro veloce corso condotto alla morte el duca Giuliano; è ben giusto che e' ne facci vendetta come fa. E la vendetta è questa: che avendo noi morto lui, lui così morto ha tolto la luce a noi*

<sup>5</sup> Gunther Neufeld, "Michelangelo's Times of Day, a Study of their Genesis," *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 48, nos. 3/4, Sep.–Dec., 1966, 273–284, esp. 280–83.

<sup>6</sup> Among interpretations of the chapel program, see: Frederick Hartt, *The Meaning of Michelangelo's Medici Chapel. Essays in Honor of Georg Swarzenski*, Chicago, 1951, 1957, 145ff. and *Michelangelo, The Complete Sculpture*, London, 1969, 161; Martin Weinberger, *Michelangelo the Sculptor*, London & New York, 1967, 396–97; Charles de Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, vol. III. *The Medici Chapel* (1948), Princeton, 1969; Erwin Panofsky, "The Neoplatonic Movement and Michelangelo," *Studies in Iconology*, New York, Evanston, San Francisco, London (1939), 1972, 171–230, esp. 199–212 Howard Hibbard, *Michelangelo*, New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London, 1974, 177–96; Edith Balas (as in note 4); Maia Wellington Gahtan, "Michelangelo and the Tomb of Time: the Intellectual Context of the Medici Chapel," *Studi di Storia dell'Arte*, vol. 13, 2002, 59–109, 2002; William E. Wallace, *Michelangelo, The Complete Sculpture, Painting, Architecture*, New York, 2008.



Fig. 112. [COL. PL. 11] Pontormo, Lunette from the interior of the villa depicting, *Vertumnus and Pomona* (fresco), Poggio a Caiano, Florence, 1519–1521. Photo: The Bridgeman Art Library.

*e cogli occhi chiusi ha serrato e' nostri, che non risplendon più sopra la terra.  
Che arrebbe di noi dunque fatto, mentre vivea?*<sup>7</sup>

Ascanio Condivi, regarding the same statues, wrote that they signify “*il tempo che consuma il tutto*” (Time which consumes all), “and to signify Time, he meant to carve a mouse . . . for this little creature is forever gnawing and consuming just as time devours all things”.<sup>8</sup> Darkness of Night and death are often interchangeable in Michelangelo’s sonnets, as in *O notte, o dolce tempo, benché nero*.<sup>9</sup> Later, in reply to Giovanni di Carlo Strozzi’s lines on the life-like qualities of the statue of *Notte*, he wrote the following epigram:

<sup>7</sup> “Day and Night speak and say: ‘We, in our swift course have led Duke Giuliano to his death; it is only fair that he should take revenge on us as he does. And his revenge is this: Having been killed by us, he, being dead, has deprived us of light, and by closing his eyes has shut ours, which no longer shine upon the earth. What might he have done with us, then, if he had lived?’”; trans. James M. Saslow, in *The Poetry of Michelangelo, An Annotated Translation*, New Haven & London, 1991, 84.

<sup>8</sup> Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti*, Rome, 1553, Florence, 1746, XLV, 34; *The Life of Michelangelo* by Ascanio Condivi, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl, ed. Helmut Wohl, 2nd. edit. 1999, University Park, PA, 1999, 67.

<sup>9</sup> Saslow (as in note 7), 232.

*Caro m'è l' sonno et più l'esser di sasso,  
mentre che 'l danno et la vergogna dura.  
non veder, non sentir, m'è gran ventura.  
pero, non me destar, deh, parla basso.*<sup>10</sup>

The statues that personified the contrasts between divine beauty as reflected in the material world and spiritual salvation through death, conveyed Michelangelo's ambivalence towards the material and the spiritual and the essence of his perpetual conflict. Despite their aesthetic legacy, inasmuch as they were models for so many artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the significance of Michelangelo's *Times of Day* was not perpetuated in subsequent art.<sup>11</sup>

Pontormo's mythological lunette of the seasons, begun in 1519 for Pope Leo X at Poggio a Caiano, has been interpreted as an allusion to the return of the Golden Age under Medici rule.<sup>12</sup> The re-flowering of the laurel, for example, traditionally pictured by the emblematic *broncone*, was invested with classical prestige by adding Virgil's motto: *uno avulso non deficit alter* ("when one is torn away another succeeds," *Aeneid*, Bk.VI). Like fifteenth century precedents, the messages are veiled under the guise of pastoral mythology, but unlike them it replaced the formal diagrammatic structure with a naturalistic context of temporal narrative and spatial structure. Pontormo's brilliant pictorial approach and the disguised complexity of his mythic-allegorical iconography were unprecedented in representations of astrological and dynastic cycles, but provided inspiration for late sixteenth and seventeenth century monumental series of seasons conflated with mythological narrative.

Towards the mid century Father Time became a familiar protagonist in allegorical programs geared to praise the sovereign and his rule in the spirit of secular classicism, and his compelling image was adapted to polemical religious propaganda. His triumphant figure was subtly integrated into grand mythological fresco cycles as well as small allegorical paintings of a more intimate nature. Artists exhibited great creativity in devising diverse programs that implicitly, or explicitly, conveyed contemporary conceptions of time. They were by no means uniform in content.

<sup>10</sup> Sleep is dear to me, and being of stone is dearer, as long as injury and shame endure; not to see or hear is a great boon to me; therefore, do not wake me—pray, speak softly." (1545–46); trans. Saslow (as in note 7), 419 and *ibid.* for Strozzi's text on *Notte*.

<sup>11</sup> Among the many examples are Cellini's *saliera* (ca. 1540–43) and the sketches by Tintoretto that were used as models for various figures; See David R. Coffin, "Tintoretto and the Medici Tombs," *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 33, No. 2, Jun. 1951, 119–25.

<sup>12</sup> Cox-Rearick (as in note 1).

We shall see that varied, even conflicting attitudes to issues of time and temporality were reflected in the art and literature of the period.

*Veritas filia temporis in the mid Cinquecento*

Towards the mid Cinquecento cyclic depictions of months and seasons, and astrological programs in monumental painting, were gradually being replaced by allegories that focused on the personification of Time. Transformed from the decrepit elder of fifteenth century illuminations into a powerful and destructive virile figure, these personifications were not derived from illustrations to Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo*, which remained anachronistic until the 1540s. We have noted that the image of Father Time conflated with Saturn devouring a child made its first appearance in printed *Trionfi* of the mid 1540s. The earliest version was published by Gabriele Giolito in 1543 (Fig. 57). When did artists begin to substitute the anachronistic vision of Time with a powerful new image?

It appears that significant initiative came from the circle of the *poligrafi* who were involved in publishing classical texts and translations thereof and were printing contemporary literature in the *volgare*. During the first half of the *Cinquecento*, the representation of Time conflated with Saturn was adopted in various art forms and media, expressing an entirely new conception of temporality. Among the earliest emblematic images to convey a more positive conception of time were illustrations depicting the motto *Veritas filia temporis*, derived from a passage on the power of Time to reveal Truth and restore Justice in the *Noctes Atticae* of Aulus Gellius (2nd c.):

If, however, there were any who were neither so endowed by nature nor so well disciplined that they could easily keep themselves from sinning by their own will power, he thought that such men would all be more inclined to sin whenever they thought that their guilt could be concealed and when they had hope of impunity because of such concealment. "But," said he, "if men know that nothing at all can be hidden for very long, they will sin more reluctantly and more secretly." Therefore he said that one should have on his lips these verses of Sophocles, the wisest of poets: See to it lest you try to conceal; Time sees and hears all, and will all reveal. Another one of the old poets, whose name has escaped my memory at present, called Truth the daughter of Time.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *"Non enim poenae aut infamiae metu non esse peccandum censebat, sed iusti honestique studio et officio. Si qui tamen non essent tali vel ingenio vel disciplina praediti, uti se vi*



The motto *Veritas filia temporis* was quoted in one of the most influential classical sources of Renaissance emblematic literature—the *Anthologia Graeca*, or *Anthologia di Epigrammatici Greci*. Based on the version transmitted by the Greek monk, Maximus Planudes (ca. 1300/1320), its earliest editions were published by Janus Lascaris in Florence (1494), Aldus in Venice (1494 & 1521) and Giunti in Florence (1519), followed by others in Paris, Basel and elsewhere. Erasmus introduced the motto *Tempus omnia revelans* with the quotation from Gellius in his *Adagiorum opus* of 1526,<sup>14</sup> and subsequently Cartari's *Le imagini degli Dei de gli antichi* (1556) described Truth as: *Questa sta occulta, ne si lacia vedere ad ognuno: onde Democrito la pose nel profondo di un pozzo dicendo ch'ella quindi non usciva mai, se il tempo, overo Saturno suo padre, come dice Plutarco, non ne la traheva fuori alle volte* (This is hidden and cannot be seen by everyone. This is why Democritus placed her at the bottom of a well, asserting that she never comes out of there, except when Saturn, who is her father according to Plutarch, pulls her out sometimes).<sup>15</sup> Actually, the pre-Socratic philosopher Democritus (ca. 460 B.C.–370 B.C.), in his epistemological theory, claimed that truth is at the bottom, meaning that it is difficult to know.

### *The Emblem of Time as a Printers Device*

Due to their role in reviving and translating classical literature, printers and typographers were instrumental in introducing the new iconography through their devices or printer's marks. Although, as noted, the motto

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*sua ac sua sponte facile a peccando tenerent, eos omnis tunc peccare proclivius existimabat, cum latere posse id peccatum putarent, impunitatemque ex ea latebra sperarent; "at si sciant" inquit "homines, nihil omnium rerum diutius posse celari, repressius pudenterque peccabitur". Propterea versus istos Sophocli, prudentissimi poetarum, in ore esse habendos dicebat: pros tauta krypte meden, hos apant'h'horon kai pant'akovon pant'anaptysei chronos. Alius quidam veterum poetarum, cuius nomen mihi nunc memoriae non est, Veritatem Temporis filiam esse dixit."* Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, XII.II.3–7, ed. P.K. Marshall, Oxford, 1968.

<sup>14</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Adagiorum chiliades*, Basel, 1526, chapter 2.4.17; *The Adages of Erasmus*, selected by William Watson Barker, Toronto, Buffalo, London, 2001. Marie Dominique Chenu assigned the phrase *Veritas filia temporis* to Bernard of Chartres (early 12th c.) in his *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century. Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, trans. L.K. Little, Chicago, 1968, 162 and by Jacques LeGoff, *Les intellectuels du Moyen Âge*, Paris, 1976, 19. See also P.E. Dutton, "The Uncovering of the *Gloriae super Platonem* of Bernard of Chartres," *Medieval Studies*, vo. 46, 1984, 193–94.

<sup>15</sup> Vincenzo Cartari, *Le imagini degli Dei de gli antichi*, Venezia, 1556; repr. of 1647 edit., Graz, 1963. This was based on Democritus, Frag. B117, in H.A. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (*The Fragments of the Presocratics*) (Berlin, 1903), ed. by W. Granz, 1934–37 (5th edit.), 1952 (6th edit.).

*Vertias filia temporis* (Truth is the daughter of Time) first appeared in the 2nd century *Noctes atticae*, the idea that Time reveals hidden truth had been a leitmotif of Greek tragedies and was converted into a proverb by classical sources.<sup>16</sup> Leon Battista Alberti already adopted a personification of *Truth*, named *Alethia*, as the daughter of *Chronos*, in his moralistic play *Philodoxus* (ca. 1424). A variant of the *veritas* theme was illustrated in the early 16th century in Strasbourg, by the printer Joannes Knoblouch (active 1504–28), who adopted as his device the female image of naked Truth emerging from a cavern, with the biblical motto *Veritas de terra orta est* (*Psalms* 84:12) inscribed in Latin, Hebrew and, Greek (Fig. 113). The entire verse in the Vulgate translation reads: *Veritas de terra orta est et iustitia de caelo prospexit. Etenim Dominus dabit benignitatem: et terra nostra dabit fructum suum* (Truth is sprung out of the earth; and justice hath looked down from heaven. For the Lord will give goodness; and our earth shall yield her fruit).<sup>17</sup> Saint Augustine, commenting on this passage, had envisioned Mary as the earth, from which Christ, the Truth, has arisen.<sup>18</sup> The passage was included in the *Breviarium romanum*, and *Veritas de terra orta est* was adopted before the mid sixteenth century as a refrain in an English Christmas carol and was included in Christmas sermons. As Saxl explained, by 1521 the theme “accompanied the proclamation of a new religious truth” and was “made the battle cry of one of the heralds of religious enlightenment, John Knoblouch of Strasbourg”.<sup>19</sup> It is noteworthy that neither the Knoblouch device nor the biblical passage, on which it was based, connected the theme of *Veritas* with the concept of Time. Concurrently, however, the revelation of Truth was attributed to Time in printer’s devices and book illustrations throughout Europe, illustrating how a traditional religious theme could be secularized or recycled in a

<sup>16</sup> Fritz Saxl, “*Veritas Filia Temporis*,” in Raymond Klibansky & H.J. Paton (eds.), *Philosophy and History: Essays presented to Ernst Cassirer*, Oxford, 1936; New York, 1963, 197–222, esp. 200, n. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Translation: Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition (DRA), *Psalms* 84:12–13. See M.L. Silvestre, *Marques Typographiques*, Paris, 1853; repr. by Louis Catherine Silvestre, Paris, 1867; Bruxelles, 1966. 349, fig. 635. [http://books.google.co.il/books/about/Marques\\_typographiques.html](http://books.google.co.il/books/about/Marques_typographiques.html); For excellent discussions of this theme in printer’s devices and emblems, see Saxl (as in note 16), 202–206; Raymond B. Waddington, “A Satirist’s Impresa: The Medals of Pietro Aretino,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 4, winter 1989, 655–81 and Anthony Parr, “Time and the Satyr,” *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 68, no. 3, 2005, 429–65.

<sup>18</sup> St. Augustine, *Exposition of the Book of Psalms*, *Psalms* 84 (or 85). Also quoted in *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, 2007, 325, XVIII.

<sup>19</sup> Saxl (as in note 16), 202–203.



Fig. 113. *Veritas de terra orta est*, printer's device of Joannes Knoublouch (act. 1504–28); from M.L.-C., Silvestre, *Marques typographiques*, Paris, 1867, repr. Amsterdam, 1971, no. 635.

pseudo-classical vein in accordance with its context, while implicitly integrating vestiges of religious moralization.

A woodcut from William Marshall's *A Goodly Primer in English*, issued in London, in 1535, already included the image of elderly Time, nude, and winged on his feet and shoulders, saving the female figure of naked Truth from a cave, as supposedly described by the Greek philosopher Democritus and later repeated by Vincenzo Cartari in his *Le imagini degli Dei degli antichi* (1556):

*Questa [la Verità] stà occulta, ne si lascia vedere ad ognuno: onde Democrito la pose nel profondo di un pozzo, dicendo ch' ella quindi non usciva mai, se il tempo, overo Saturno suo padre, come dice Plutarco, non ne la traheva fuori alle volte.*

(This [Truth] is hidden and cannot be seen by everyone. This is why Democritus placed her to the bottom of a well, asserting that she never comes out of there, except when Saturn, who is her father according to Plutarch, pulls her out sometimes).

In the enlarged version of his *Imagini degli Dei degli antichi* (1571), Cartari used the device of his publisher Marcolini with the *veritas filia temporis* motto as his emblem (Fig. 114). In the Marshall woodcut of 1535, a monster with bat wings, a tail and a fist full of serpents, labeled *Hypocrisy*, completed the protestant allegory of reform liberation. Bats traditionally denoted the blindness of non-believers or heretics, and the bat wings were ironically adopted here to characterize the Roman Church. Noting that this representation of Time saving Truth is reminiscent of Christ as the Savior in the Harrowing of Hell, Saxl declared: "the English artist applies the motto to the defense of a new religious conviction", in a reform context that may reflect the influence of Erasmus.<sup>20</sup> The *Veritas filia temporis* theme was also used in Paris and Geneva by the printer Conrad Bade, between 1546 and 1561. Variations on the theme and other personifications of Time proliferated in the marks of northern printers and spread to other media.<sup>21</sup> It should be underlined that, from the 1530s, the conceit

<sup>20</sup> Saxl (as in note 16), 206.

<sup>21</sup> See Silvestre (as in notes 17 & 36). For a rare example of the *Tempus* device and motto *hanc aciem sola retundit virtus* in Italy, see Giacomo Antonio Marta *Doctoris Martae Neapolitani iurisconsulti praeclarissimi et in almo studio Pisano iuriscaesarei professoris digniss. horis vespertinis, Repetitiones in rubricam, et l. l. ff. soluto matrimonio, per q—* Florentiae: apud Georgium Marescotum, 1599. The editor and typographer Giorgio Marescotti, of French origin, published widely in Florence between 1563–1600. His regular device showed a galley in a rough sea, and the *Tempus* device, copied from Simon de Colines for the above volume, was exceptional.



Fig. 114. *Veritas filia temporis*, printer's device of Francesco Marcolini da Forlì, first used in the 1536 edition of *Cantus Liber quinque Missarum Adriani Willaert*.

of Truth exposed or revealed by Time was widely adopted to manifest religious, moral, political or social critique.

We have noted that the personification of Time revealing the nude female figure of Truth was adopted by the Italian author, editor and typographer Francesco Marcolini da Forlì (1497?–1576) in 1536 as his printer's device. Working in Venice, Marcolini was noteworthy for his publications of innovative *volgare* texts, among them writings by Pietro Aretino, who may have been responsible for, or collaborated on, the *Vertias*



*filia temporis* device.<sup>22</sup> Aretino wrote the forward to Marcolini's 1536 edition of Adrian Willaert's *Cantus Liber quinque Missarum Adriani Willaert* (also known as *Cinque Mesi*), which was dedicated to Alessandro de' Medici, tyrannical ruler of Florence and spouse of the Emperor's daughter, Margherita of Austria. On the basis of this dedication, the *Veritas* device on the title page was interpreted in a political vein by Saxl, who wrote "The Truth that Aretino celebrates is the success of Florentine policy in the support of the efforts of Charles V to ensure a Catholic union",<sup>23</sup> an idea which has been reiterated in more recent literature.<sup>24</sup> Aretino, in fact, had discontinued his earlier satirical writings, and began composing religious works between 1534 and 1543, which he then stopped in fear of the inquisition.<sup>25</sup> The influence over Aretino of the charismatic Capuchin preacher, Bernardino Occhino, is well known and documented.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, Aretino's close friend Titian (Tiziano Vecellio), was the devoted artist of the Habsburg Emperor Charles V, leader of the battle against the Protestants. One may be highly skeptical, however, about associating Aretino's political message to Alessandro with Marcolini's intention in choosing the *Veritas filia temporis* device. The avant-garde *volgare* works published by his printing house could hardly be associated with pro-Catholic propaganda, quite the contrary.<sup>27</sup> His own eccentric book *Le Sorti* (1540) and writings by his friend Niccolò Franco contained anticlerical remarks and were listed in the Index of the Inquisition. The hidden truths exposed by Time, with some help from Marcolini and his authors, were branded as heresy by the Catholic establishment.

On the verso of the title page in Willaert's *Cantus Liber* is another Marcolini device depicting *Veritas* crowned by Victory as she treads on a satyr, with the motto *Veritas odium parit* (freely translated as "Truth engenders Hate"). This motto is presumed to be an invention of Aretino,

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<sup>22</sup> Aretino wrote the forward for Marcolini's 1536 edition of Adrian Willaert's *Cantus Liber quinque Missarum Adriani Willaert* (also known as *Cinque Mesi*), which he dedicated to Alessandro de' Medici on the occasion of having prevailed over his enemies, regained the rule of Florence and married Margarita of Austria, illegitimate daughter of the Emperor Charles V. see Waddington (as in note 17), 672 ff.

<sup>23</sup> Saxl, (as in note 16), 198.

<sup>24</sup> See Waddington (as in note 17), 672–74.

<sup>25</sup> See Christopher Cairns, *Pietro Aretino and the Republic of Venice, Researches on Aretino and his Circle in Venice*, 1527–1556, Florence, 1985.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 81ff.

<sup>27</sup> Among Marcolini's publications were: Aretino's *Stanze*, 1537 & *Il marescalco*, 1539; his *Tempio di Amore*, 1536; Niccolò Franco's *Le pistole vulgari*, 1539; Anton Francesco Doni's, *I marmi*, 1552/53; Sebastiano Serlio's *Regole generali, Il Libro terzo* (1556) and Daniele Barbaro's translation and commentary of Vitruvius: *Dieci libri dell'architettura di M. Vitruvio* (1556). Franco was hanged by the inquisition in 1570.

who had it inserted in the engraved portrait made for him by Giovanni Jacopo Caraglio between 1536 and 1539.<sup>28</sup> When Marcolini returned to the *Veritas filia temporis* device in the 1550s, he again combined it with *Veritas odium parit*, but subsequently used the Time device separately. Marcolini, who had a broad range of interests in technical fields, including horology, also composed treatises on clocks.<sup>29</sup> Whatever the original associations of his device might have been, there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate his preoccupation with theoretical and practical aspects of time and temporality.

While Saxl and later authors have identified the literary sources of the *Veritas filia temporis* motto, suggestions regarding the source of Marcolini's iconography are still inconclusive.<sup>30</sup> The oval frame and figure compositions are reminiscent of classical gems, many of which were in Renaissance collections, and it is possible that Marcolini's designer found a model in these for the visual formula. On the other hand, we must consider the alternative that the device represents an original iconographic formulation derived from the literary sources. A problem is presented by the appearance of a third figure, identified as *Calumnia*, besides those of *Veritas* and *Tempus*.<sup>31</sup> This prompted Saxl to associate the device with the *Calumnia of Apelles* theme, based on Lucian's *ekphrasis*. From the literary point of view, this might be feasible, but it certainly does not explain the iconography. Mantegna and Botticelli visually reconstructed all of the personifications from Lucian's narrative, while Marcolini's allegorical device concentrates on three figures (Figs. 100 & 114).<sup>32</sup> Time itself, the

<sup>28</sup> See Saxl (as in note 16), 198–200 and Waddington (as in note 17), 655–81.

<sup>29</sup> Anton Francesco Doni (*Lettere d'Antonfrancesco Doni, Seconda libreria*, Venice, 1551, 86) referred to an unpublished treatise on clocks by Marcolini. For conceptions of Time in Doni's *I marmi*, see Maia Wellington Gahtan, "Notions of Past and Future in Italian Renaissance Art and Letters", in Christian Heck & Kristen Lippincott, *Symbols of Time in the History of Art*, Turnhout, 2002, 69–83. See also Roberto Panicali, *Orologi e Orologiai del Rinascimento Italiano, La Scuola Urbinate*, (Sixteenth Century Italian Chamber Clocks and the Urbino School), Urbino, 1988, which presents, besides an illustrated review of 16th century clock making and technology, a study of actual clocks depicted in Titian's portraits. Regarding literature on clocks in the early modern period, see Ugo Franco Ziviani, *La Letteratura del Tempo, I testi a stampa sugli orologi di autori Italiani* (1473–1899), Milano, 2006.

<sup>30</sup> See Waddington (as in note 17); Stefano Pierguidi, "Dalla Veritas filia Temporis di Francesco Marcolini all'Allegoria di Londra del Bronzino: Il contributo di Francesco Salviati" *Artibus et historiae*, vol. 26, no. 51, 2005, 159–72 and Anthony Parr, "Time and the Satyr," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 68, no. 3, 2005, 429–65.

<sup>31</sup> Johannes Muslerus, *De liberalibus disciplinis cum iurisprudencia coniugendus*, Venice, 1538; quoted by Saxl (as in note 16), 201.

<sup>32</sup> See Sara Agnoletto, "La Calumnia di Apelle: recupero e riconversione ecfrastica del trattato di Luciano in Occidente," *La Rivista di Engramma*, 42, luglio-agosto, 2005—<http://>

dominant protagonist in the device, has no precedent either in Lucian's text or in late *Quattrocento* and early *Cinquecento* illustrations thereof.

Although there has been no effort to identify the designer of Marcolini's device, one might assume that it was designed by a prominent artist working in Venice and/or the Veneto. During the 1530s Marcolini had ties with Titian and Francesco Salviati. It has been suggested that Titian designed the beautiful frontispiece for Aretino's *Le Stanze* in 1537, just a year after the latter began printing his device (Fig. 115).<sup>33</sup> Although a woman called Angela Sirena has been cited as the inspiration for Aretino's heavenly siren, we might note that the theme had previously been combined with the motto COL TEMPO by Carpaccio (Fig. 116).<sup>34</sup> The siren depicted in the context of Fortuna's sea metaphor was obviously familiar to the Venetians. In these very years, during the 1530s and early 1540s, Titian was experimenting with mannerist figures and illusionistic foreshortening based upon the examples of Central Italian art. Francesco Salviati (1510–63) was working in Venice between 1539 and 1541, during which time he designed woodcuts for at least two of Marcolini's publications, his *Le Sorti* and Aretino's *La vita di Maria Vergine* (1539). It has been suggested that the Grimani brothers were instrumental in bringing Salviati to Venice after his association with Giulio Clovio (Juraj Julije Klović) in illustrating the Grimani *Pontificale*. In any case, Marino and Giovanni Grimani had strong ties with Francesco's patron Cardinal Giovanni Salviati, from whom he took his surname.<sup>35</sup> Francesco Salviati, who subsequently became one of the chief creators of allegorical time-imagery in monumental Florentine painting, might be a hypothetical candidate for the design of Marcolini's device, despite the fact that he is known to have arrived in Venice three years after its first appearance in 1536.

Emblematic devices related to that of Marcolini were being used by northern printers at this time. Some of these were influenced by illustrations to the printed *Trionfi* that were popularized throughout Italy and the North.

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[www.engramma.it/engramma\\_v4/rivista/saggio/42/42\\_saggiogalleria.html](http://www.engramma.it/engramma_v4/rivista/saggio/42/42_saggiogalleria.html); based on Jean Michel Massing, *Du texte à l'image. La Calomnie d'Apelle et son iconographie*, Strasbourg, 1990. Lucien's *De calumnia* was first printed among his *Opere* in Florence, 1499.

<sup>33</sup> Waddington (as in note 17).

<sup>34</sup> See "Pietro Aretino: Stanze: Signature a1," in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*, New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—[www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/37.37.2](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/37.37.2) (October 2006).

<sup>35</sup> See Philippe Costamagna, "Le Mécénat et la Politiques Culturelle du Cardinal Giovanni Salviati", in *Francesco Salviati et la Bella Maniera*, Rome, 2001, 217–52, esp. 245.



Fig. 115. Frontispiece of Pietro Aretino, *Le Stanze*, woodcut, Francesco Marcolini da Forlì (publ.), 1537. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1937, © Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, New York.





Fig. 116. Vittore Carpaccio, *Col Tempo* emblem, detail of the *Miracle at the Rialto*, Venice, ex. Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista, Galleria dell'Accademia.



## T B M P V S.

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Fig. 117. *Saturn/Time*, printer's device of Michel Hillenius (1511–1546), Anvers; from M.L.-C., Silvestre, *Marques typographiques*, Paris, 1867, repr. Amsterdam, 1971, no. 672.

Between 1514 and 1539 Michel Hillenius (or Hoochstrate) of Anvers introduced several variants of the Time device. One depicted the nude Saturn, about to devour his child, with an hourglass on his shield, a scythe, and one foot on a ball strangely grasped by hands (Fig. 117). Another showed the nude *Tempus*, winged on his shoulders and ankles, carrying a large saw-like razor in his right hand and an *ouroborus* in the left.<sup>36</sup> Among other northern printers who adopted the figure of Time for their device was Simon de Colines in Paris. Between 1520 and 1546 he introduced a satyr-like figure of *Tempus*, winged and carrying the scythe of Death (Fig. 118). A flowing mass of hair, hiding his upper face, betrays the influ-

<sup>36</sup> For personifications of Time in French and Flemish printer's devices, see Silvestre (as in note 17), figs. 79, 80, 329, 432, 434 (Simon de Collines); 185, 186 (Jean Temporal); 286, 287, 504 (Guillaume Chaudière); 485 (Conrad Bade) & 672, 673 (Michel Hellenius or Hoochstrate).

ence of the *Kairos-Occasio* theme. The emblematic conflation of Time with *Kairos*, the propitious, fleeting moment, was complemented by the moralistic motto *Hanc Aciem Sola Retundit Virtus* (Only Virtue Blunts the Blade's Edge), which was subsequently adopted by Guillaume Chaudière (Paris, 1564–1598). The printer Jean Temporal (Lyon, 1550–1559) combined an eclectic image of Time with the suggestive inscription *Ex Tempore Prudentia*, which is also a play on his own name.<sup>37</sup> It is notable that the earliest typographical marks depicting the personification of Time, and most of those employed throughout the 16th century, were designed for French and Flemish printers. Marcolini's device was an exception.

*Personifications of Time: North Italian Monumental Art of the Mid Century*

One of the early adaptations of a temporal allegory to a monumental program was that of the Veronese painter and medalist Giovanni Francesco Caroto (ca. 1480–1555), who adopted the *Veritas filia temporis* theme for an octagonal ceiling painting of about 1524–30 (Fig. 119). Caroto was connected to the patron Giulio Della Torre (1480–1560/63), who also devised medallions dedicated to his contemporaries.<sup>38</sup> Caroto's winged Time appears as a strong and benevolent elder with an hourglass, who is rescuing the nude maiden *Veritas* from the grip of a powerful young devil with a caduceus. The painting precedes Marcolini's *Veritas filia temporis* by a decade, at most, and indicates that an iconographic model for the theme already existed in the Veneto.

Not far away from Caroto's Veronese painting, an allegory of Time was integrated by Giulio Romano into the frenzied mythological drama

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 187. *Ex Tempore Prudentia* (practical wisdom is subject to time?) seems to be derived from concepts of time and eternity in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas as, for example: "*divina ratio nihil concipit ex tempore, sed habet aeternum conceptum*", *Summa Theologiae*, Rome, 1894, 1,2, q.91, a.1. See Enrico Pattaro, *An Overview on Practical Reason in Aquinas*, Stockholm, 2010. But *ex tempore* may be also translated as spontaneous, or extemporaneous, in which case the reference may be to spontaneous reason or judgment.

<sup>38</sup> See Hans-Joachim Eberhardt, "Giovanni Francesco Caroto: la *Veritas filia Temporis*, un centro soffitto da studiolo dei Della Torre," in A. Brugnoli & G.M. Varanini (eds.), *Magna Verona Vale, Studi in onore di Pierpaolo Brugnoli*, a cura di Andrea Brugnoli e Gianmaria Varanini, Verona 2008 325–44. For Caroto's medal of "Hercules chastising Vice" (ca. 1518), the latter depicted with *Occasio's* forelock, see Rudolph Wittkower, "Chance, Time and Virtue," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 1, 1937–38, 313–21: see note 5. Reprinted in his *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols*, London, (1977) 1987, 97–106, esp. 105, fig. 152.



Fig. 118. *Tempus*, printer's device of Simon de Colines, Paris, after 1520; from M.L.-C., Silvestre, *Marques typographiques*, Paris, 1867, repr. Amsterdam, 1971, no. 329.



Fig. 119. Giovanni Francesco Caroto, *Veritas filia temporis*, ceiling painting of unknown origin, 1524–1530, Verona, private collection.

on the vault of the *Camera dei Giganti* (ca. 1530–31) in the Palazzo Te, decorated for Federico Gonzaga. Already in the preparatory sketch one sees the elderly Father Time, conflated with Saturn, carrying his scythe and *ouroboros*, and crowned by a winged hermaphroditic *Kairos*, the latter identifiable by the forelock in front and baldness in back (Fig. 120). Another figure of dubious gender and mixed identity, is the two-headed Prudence combined with the key bearing Janus. This group is completed by a melancholic female with a serpent, said to be Gaea, the earth god-





Fig. 120. [COL. PL. 12] Giulio Romano, *Chronos, Kairos, Janus/Prudenza, Poenitentia* (and/or *Gaia*), sketch in pen, ink and wash for detail of vault fresco, Mantua, Palazzo Te, *Camera dei Giganti*, 1530/31. Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum.



dess, mourning the *Fall of the Giants*, who are her children.<sup>39</sup> She also resembles the image of *Poenitentia* (Penitence) who mourned the lost past in allegories of *Kairos*. It has been emphasized that this phase in the decorations of Palazzo Te coincided with Federico Gonzaga's ascendancy, when in April 1530 Emperor Charles V raised him to the rank of Duke of Mantua, thus consolidating his position in the Habsburg power structure.<sup>40</sup> Political interpretations of the *Sala dei Giganti* have cast Jupiter, "the Almighty Father" hurling his thunderbolts, as the emperor Charles V or the Christian God with the emperor as militant leader of the religious order.<sup>41</sup> It is beyond the scope of this study to judge the relevance of specific sociopolitical interpretations, but there can be little doubt that the mythological program is a foil for Gonzaga panegyrics. By integrating the personifications of Time and temporality into the mass of Olympic gods, the artist underlined the allegorical reading of Ovid's story, following the exegetic tradition of the *Ovid moralisé* and the *Ovidius moralizatus* that was still adopted in contemporary art.<sup>42</sup> Other rooms of the Palazzo were decorated with moralizing scenes, promoting Gonzaga's political aspirations, his virtues, prosperity and sovereign image. Time, is not mentioned in Ovid's account of the fallen giants, but nevertheless participates in this cosmological triumph over the rebels. He is surrounded by allies that personify aspects of temporality—*bifrons Janus*, who held the key to beginnings and ends and was praised for his circumspection,<sup>43</sup> *Kairos/Occasio*, the transient opportune moment, and *Prudence*, who wisely charted the future on the basis of past experience and therefore would catch *Kairos* by

<sup>39</sup> See Valerie Taylor, "Giulio Romano as Court Artist to Federico Gonzaga in the Early 1530s," in *Giulio Romano, Master Designer*, An exhibition of Drawings, edited by Janet Cox Rearick, New York, 1999, 98–100 & 108.

<sup>40</sup> Taylor (as above), 98.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>42</sup> For a discussion of Ovidian exegesis and its adoption in 16th c painting, see Jane C. Nash, *Veiled Images, Titian's Mythological Paintings for Philip II*, Philadelphia, London, Toronto, 1985 and S. Cohen, "Animals in the Paintings of Titian: A Key to hidden Meanings," in *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*, Leiden & Boston, 2008, 135–163, esp. 150–56, see bibliographical references to sources in both publications.

<sup>43</sup> See Andrea Alciato, *Emblemata*, Augsburg, 1546, *Prudentes* emblem (6v) where Janus is described:

*Iane bifrons, qui iam transacta futuraque calles, / Quique retro sannas, sicut et ante, vides: / Te tot cur oculis, cur fingunt vultibus? An quod / Circumspectum hominem forma fuisse docet?*

(Two-headed Janus, you know about what has already happened and what is yet to come, you see the jeering faces behind just as you see them in front. Why do they represent you with so many eyes, why with so many faces? Is it because this form tells us that you were a man of circumspection?).

his forelock. Giulio Romano uses conflated identities and combined genders to suggest levels or alternatives of meaning, with the typical astute humor that is meant to astound and confuse the spectator. The ethical and pragmatic applications of time and prudence, the concepts personified in this fresco and later art, were discussed, for example, in Pontano's *De prudentia* (1508), Machiavelli's, *Il principe* (1515), both indebted to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and the commentary by Thomas of Aquinas, and later in Anton Francesco's *I marmi* (1552).<sup>44</sup>

Giulio's temporal personifications may have inspired Girolamo da Carpi's *Kairos* and *Penitence* painted for Duke Ercole II of Ferrara (ca. 1542, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie), which Adolfo Venturi identified as part of a documented program including Justice and Peace.<sup>45</sup> These examples demonstrate how images of time were disseminated in propagandist programs of northern Italy. It is curious, however, that most of these temporal personifications, dating from the first half of the sixteenth century, had no relation to classical prototypes. The situation was quite different in Florence.

*Time in the Artistic Propaganda of Cosimo I—Francesco Salviati:  
Time in Political Strategy*

The most brilliant and creative court artists serving Cosimo I de' Medici (reg. 1537–74) were instrumental in promoting innovative time imagery in the context of sovereign and dynastic propaganda. Agnolo Bronzino (1503–72), Francesco Salviati (Francesco de' Rossi, 1510–63) and Giorgio Vasari (1511–74), who interacted, cooperated, and sometimes competed in the execution of monumental fresco programs, altar paintings, tapestry cartoons and even stage sets, were mutually inspired in their visual

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<sup>44</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *Il principe*, Chap. xxi, 6: *Mai non si cerca fuggire uno inconveniente che non si incorra in un altro; la prudenza consiste in sapere conoscere le qualità delli inconvenienti e pigliare el men triso per buono*; originally cited in edition by R. Aron, F. Melotti and E. Janni, Milan, 1975, 179–80. See Eugene Garver, *Machiavelli and the History of Prudence*, University of Wisconsin, 1987. For a review of the concepts of prudence and time in Renaissance literature and art, with special reference to Doni, see Gahtan, (as in note 29) 69–77. Her interpretation of Titian's so-called *Allegory of Prudence*, is a reiteration of Panofsky's theory, with which I have debated in "Titian's London allegory and the Three Beasts of his *Selva Oscura*," in S. Cohen, *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*, Leiden & Boston, 2008, 165–94.

<sup>45</sup> See Wittkower, 1987 (as in note 38), 110–12, fig. 156.

portrayals of Time.<sup>46</sup> The dependence on classical models was salient in their prelusory iconography, but the reinterpretation of temporal themes in Medici propaganda involved more than just classical revival.<sup>47</sup> Traditional themes of cyclic return and dynastic renewal were newly formulated in *all'antica* historical contexts, and personifications of time were conceived in heroic proportions. The new iconography proclaimed that the forceful control of time, in general, and the propitious moment, in particular were the medium of Cosimo's power and glory as a prudent and exemplary ruler.

In his monumental decorations for the *Sala dell'Udienza* in the Florentine Palazzo Vecchio (1543–1545) Francesco Salviati introduced a whole series of large scale temporal personifications.<sup>48</sup> A monochrome allegory of *Peace Burning the Weapons of War* occupies the center of the east wall. Flanking the *Triumph of Marcus Furius Camillus* to the left and *Ransom of the Gallic Leader Brennus*,<sup>49</sup> to the right, are duplicated fictive bronze

<sup>46</sup> Among the publications that deal with this subject, see Catherine Monbeig Goguel, Philippe Costamagna & Michel Hochmann (eds.), *Salviati e la Bella Maniera: Actes des colloques de Rome and de Paris* (1998), Rome, 2001 and Janet Cox-Rearick, "Friendly Rivals: Bronzino and Salviati at the Medici Court, 1543–48," *Master Drawings*, Vol. 43, no. 3, Fall 2005, 219–315.

<sup>47</sup> Regarding Cosimo I's iconographic advisors, see Jennifer Fletcher, "Francesco Salviati and Remigio Fiorentino," *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 121, 1979, 793–95; Th. Van Veen Henk, "Republicanism in the visual Propaganda of Cosimo I de' Medici," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 55, 1992, 200–209 and *Cosimo I de' Medici and his Self Representation in Florentine Art and Culture*, trans. A.P. McCormick, Cambridge, 2006, 5–7; note 6 for bibliography on his advisor Vincenzo Borghini. I have not found references to the involvement of any known iconographic advisors to the Medici, such as Vincenzo Borghini, Annibale Caro or Cosimo Bartoli, in devising or recommending specific temporal imagery.

<sup>48</sup> See Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, Florence, 1568, ed. G. Milanesi, Florence, 9 vols., 1878–85, vol. VII, 22–25. The comprehensive monographs on Francesco Salviati have contributed basic information and observations regarding Salviati's time imagery; see Iris Hofmeister Cheney, *Francesco Salviati (1510–1563)*, PhD diss., New York University, 1963, Ann Arbor, 1963, vol. II, 197, 201–202, 367; Melinda Wilcox Schlitt, *Francesco Salviati and the Rhetoric of Style*, PhD diss., John Hopkins University, 1991, 193–98, 201, 220–227; Luisa Mortari, *Francesco Salviati*, Rome, 1992, 23–26, 110–12.

<sup>49</sup> The stories of Camillus were chosen as *exempla* of the ideal virtues assigned to Cosimo as leader and statesman. Previous writers have shown that from the *Trecento* scholars had idealized the Roman general based on the writings of Plutarch and Livy, who had praised him as liberator of Rome and honored him as a second Romulus. Camillus was painted by Ghirlandaio (ca. 1482–85) in the *Sala del Giglio* of the Palazzo Vecchio and his Triumph had featured in a Medici masque in 1514. See *Medici Archive Project*, doc. 2389, of 9 Oct. 1543—a letter from Lorenzo di Andrea Pagni to Pier Francesco Ricci instructing the latter to provide Salviati with information on deeds of Camillus in order to submit sketches for the Duke; Iris Cheney (as in note 48), vol. 2, 645, doc. 14; Cox-Rearick, 1984 (as in note 1), 35–36; Ettore Allegri & Alessandro Cecchi, *Palazzo Vecchio e I Medici*, Florence,

statues depicting two-faced *Prudenza*, with her serpent of wisdom, seizing *Occasio* by the forelock (Fig. 121). These were described by Vasari, who was still influenced by the earlier conflation of *Fortuna* and *Occasio*, as “*una occasione che preso la fortuna per lo crine*”.<sup>50</sup> This extraordinary and innovative composition of the two intertwined female personifications, placed under Cosimo’s sign of Capricorn, allegorically conveys the key message of this wall. An *impresa* depicted on the reverse of a medal (ca. 1535) for Giovanni Maria del Monte, later Pope Julius III (Fig. 103), has been cited as an iconographic precedent for Salviati’s *Prudenza* seizing *Occasio* by the forelock.<sup>51</sup> Although the general concept is similar, the iconography differs considerably. Contrary to Salviati’s pair, both personifications on the medal are nude. The figure rapidly escaping is *Fortuna* on the sea with her wind-blown sail and dolphin. She assumes the running position of *Kairos* and has acquired the forelock of *Kairos-Occasio* that has been seized by another personification of conflated identity. Characterized by her frontal position as she stands on solid ground, the second figure combines attributes of *Prudenza* with the cornucopia of *Felicità*. The formal separation of the two figures in a right to left narrative progression, the significant juxtaposition of contrasting positions, and the multiplications of identifying attributes, all make it unlikely that Salviati used the Del Monte *impresa* as his model. It is more feasible that he borrowed the conceit from some literary source and created his brilliant design by reworking figure drawings in his collection as, for example, a drawing of *Geometria* (Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins) that is very similar in approach and identical in some details to *Occasio*.<sup>52</sup>

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SPES, 1980, 42–43; Mortari (as in note 48), 112; Philippe Morel, “*Entre destinée et occasio, de la virtù du prince aux arcanes du pouvoir*,” 2008, 1–24: <http://umr6576.cest.univ-tours.fr/Publications/HasardetProvidence>.

<sup>50</sup> Giorgio Vasari (as in note 48), VII, 23. See Frederick Kiefer, “The Conflation of Fortuna and Occasio in Renaissance thought and iconography,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, vol. 9, 1979, 1–27, and my discussion of *Fortuna* and *Occasio* in chapter 8.

<sup>51</sup> On the medal, see George F. Hill, “Notes on Italian Medals, XVIII: Giovanni Zecchi and the Bolognese School,” *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 25, no. 138, Sept. 1914, 335–41; Giuseppe Toderi e Fiorenza Vannel, *Le medaglie italiane del XVI secolo*, Firenze, 2000, n. 1284 and Angelo Gravano Bardelli in “Cenni numismatici sul ritratto di Cardinale di Sebastiano del Piombo”: [http://www.carnesecchi.eu/cenni\\_numismatici.htm](http://www.carnesecchi.eu/cenni_numismatici.htm). See discussion in Alessandro Nova, “*Occasio pars virtutis*. Considerazioni sugli affreschi di Francesco Salviati per il cardinale Ricci,” *Paragone*, 31, no. 365, 1980, 29–63, esp. 37–38 & 60, n. 59; Stefano Pierguidi, “Le allegorie di Francesco Salviati nella Sala dell’Udienza di Palazzo Vecchio,” *Paragone*, anno LVII, 67, May 2006, 4–13, esp. 10 and Morel (as in note 49), 8.

<sup>52</sup> See Nova (as above), 29–63, fig. 35b.



Fig. 121. [COL. PL. 13] Francesco Salviati, *Prudenza Seizing Occasio by the Forelock*, Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, *Sala dell'Udienza*, 1543–1545, su concessione dei Musei Civici Fiorentini.



Elements of the conception and *maniera* stylization seem to have been inspired by Giulio Romano, whose paintings in the *Palazzo Te* in Mantua had been seen by Salviati in 1541, two years before inception of his work in the Florentine *Sala dell'Udienza*. Among the gods of the Olympus in the *Camera dei Giganti* Giulio had painted the two-faced *Prudenza* and *Kairos-Occasio* with a forelock, who is about to crown *Chronos* (Fig. 120). *Prudenza* is twisted on her axis in a *figura serpentinata* pose, resembling that of Salviati's *Occasio*. Similarly posed female figures can also be seen elsewhere in Giulio's work, as in *Venus with a Dolphin* in the *Sala dei Cavalli*. Most revealing of his influence in the *Sala dell'Udienza* project is the *Triumph of Camillus* scene that was composed on the basis of the *Triumph of Scipio* tapestry (Palazzo Quirinale) designed by Giulio Romano in the 1530s for François I, King of France.<sup>53</sup> There are many visual quotations, indicating that Salviati saw Giulio's design or one of the *modelli* for a series of twenty-one tapestries that were taken to France by Francesco Primaticcio, or else he had access to drawings thereof.

The temporal theme is further elaborated on the west wall of the *Sala dell'Udienza*, where Salviati recreated the sculpted figure of the Medici *Kairos* relief as a pictorial living image (1544–48) (Fig. 122). Salviati's elderly *Kairos* retains his bald head and forelock, the wings on his back and heels, and the scales balanced on a razor that he is typically adjusting. The direction of the figure is reversed and some changes were made in positions of the limbs. A curious modification is that of the leg positions, and the addition of a shawl around the hip area, which were obviously designed to avoid the pronounced phallic element in the Medici *Kairos* and other *Kairos* reliefs. The modest covering of the genital area applied to all the male nudes in the *Sala dell'Udienza*, though not to Hecate, seems to reflect the atmosphere of moral stringency and suppression promoted by the Catholic Reformation and sanctions enforced by the inquisition from the 1540s. Political ties of the Medici with Charles V, the Habsburg Emperor and leader of the Catholic Reformation, and Eleonora's association with the Jesuits, would have encouraged the kind of artistic restrictions that were subsequently dictated by decrees of the ecumenical Council of Trent.

<sup>53</sup> The original tapestries were destroyed but a version of the *Triumph of Scipio* that was woven from the cartoon is now in the Palazzo Quirinale Rome. See Janet Cox-Rearick (ed.), *Giulio Romano, Master Designer, An exhibition of Drawings*, CUNY, 1999, 116–117, fig. 73.



Fig. 122. [COL. PL. 14] Francesco Salviati, *Kairos*, Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, *Sala dell'Udienza*, 1544–1548, su concessione dei Musei Civici Fiorentini.

The impression of the north wall of the *Sala* is dominated by three large allegorical figures flanking windows. Above them are events from the life of Camillus in oval frames, Michelangelesque *ignudi*, garlands, devices and emblems of Cosimo I. The serpent entwined goddess Hecate on the left, interpreted by Vasari as *Luna* in accordance with Egyptian iconography, stands upon the heads of a horse, a man and a dog (Fig. 123).<sup>54</sup> Hecate was a chthonian goddess associated with liminal time, such as twilight, equinoxes, solstices, and time that is neither past, present or future. In Ptolemaic Alexandria she was conflated with Diana and the moon, and the Egyptian connection was obviously known in the *Cinquecento*.<sup>55</sup> She was also known as *trimorphe* (three-formed) and *trivia* (goddess of the three ways). Although there were ancient precedents for the adoption of animal heads in the iconography of time, it is not clear whether Salviati and his advisor were aware of these meanings.<sup>56</sup>

An allegory in the center of the north wall was identified by Vasari as *Il Favore*, depicted as a nude youth surrounded by positive and negative personifications as “described by Lucian” (i.e. *De Calumnia*).<sup>57</sup> Most intriguing is the personification of time at the extreme right of this wall, directly or indirectly derived from the Roman relief of *Phanes* that may already have been in the Este collection at San Marino a Rio, near Modena, by that time (Fig. 124). According to Vasari, this serpent entwined, winged

<sup>54</sup> Vasari (as in note 48), VII, 24.

<sup>55</sup> Morel (as in note 49), 12, has interpreted the triple head on the basis of Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica*, where the horse assumedly symbolizes the rapid passage of time, the aged man represents the force of present time and the dog is a sign of the future. As both the dog and the horse were associated with Hecate in Antiquity, Salviati or his advisor must have relied on some literary source. In Greek esoteric writings connected with *Hermes Trismegistos*, Hecate is described as having heads of a dog, a serpent and a horse. The horse in far-eastern mythology was associated with the sun, solar symbolism and solar divinity as demonstrated, for example, in Indian Buddhist and Hindu literature and iconography from the first centuries AD. The Indian god *Vishnu* as *Vishvarupa* or *Vaikuntha* was generally depicted as three-headed, with side-heads of a lion (on the south) and boar (on the north), although the boar head was sometimes replaced by an equine head. Spatial and temporal connotations were implicit in this complex iconography. See T.S. Maxwell, *Viśvarupa*, Delhi, 1988, esp. 113–36. Horses led the sun chariot and still symbolized the seasons in Renaissance art. See Appendix I, no. 10.

<sup>56</sup> An Orphic source describes *Chronos* as a monstrous figure—a serpent with three heads, of a bull, a lion and the face of the god in the middle. This hybrid is winged and designated as *ágýratos*, non-aging or undying. Orphic epithets alternatively call him *mégas* (great) or *áévas* (eternally flowing): Orphica, *Theogonies*, Fragment 54 (from Damascius) (trans. M.L. West) (Greek hymns ca. 3rd–2nd C. B.C.); Martin L. West, *Orphic Poems*, Oxford, 1983.

<sup>57</sup> Vasari (as in note 48), 24. See Schlitt (as in note 48) 202–203; Pierguidi (as in note 51), 5 and Morel (as in note 49) 15 regarding the literary sources of *il Favore*.



Fig. 123. Francesco Salviati, *Hecate-Luna*, Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, *Sala dell'Udienza*, 1544–1548, su concessione dei Musei Civici Fiorentini.



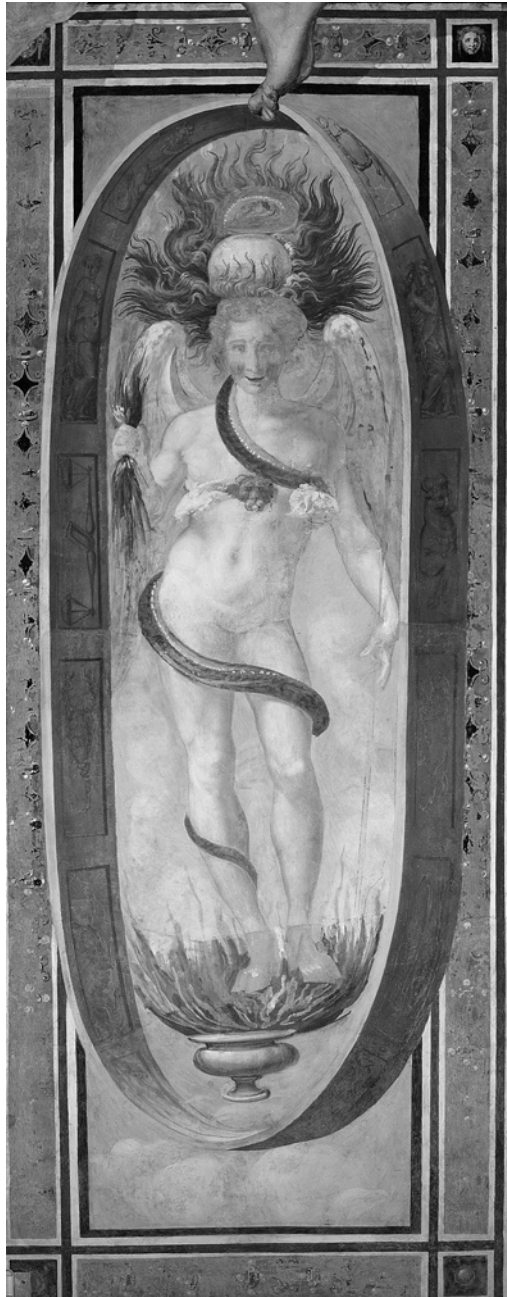


Fig. 124. Francesco Salviati, *Phanes-Sol*, Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, Sala dell'Udienza, 1544–1548. Photo: Paolo Tosi, su concessione dei Musei Civici Fiorentini.



deity emerging from a flaming egg is an image of *Sol*, clearly a counterpart to *Hecate-Luna*. But Vasari made no mention of the name *Phanes*, the primeval Orphic divinity produced out of an egg formed by *Chronos*. Salviati's source was probably the *Cinquecento* allegorical relief sculpted at the entrance of the Odeon Cornaro in Padua, which in turn was copied from the Modena relief.<sup>58</sup> Three animal heads on the deity's chest, those of a goat, lion and ram, originally would have conveyed an astronomical-astrological significance as signs of the zodiacal constellations Capricorn, Leo and Aries. These are emphasized in addition to the zodiacal frame that symbolically marks the solar ecliptic. The same animal heads were repeated in the version of the Odeon Cornaro and on a later *Phanes* relief located on an under-arch of the *Libreria Marciana* in Venice. Presumably, the original meaning of these three animal heads was unknown to Salviati, and modern scholars have suggested that they represent the three parts of time, based on Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica*.<sup>59</sup>

We have seen that Salviati's personifications were either free copies of antique visual sources, as in the case of the *Kairos* and *Phanes* reliefs, or were original designs that integrated *all'antica* elements, as in the case of *Prudenza* seizing the forelock of *Occasio*. The eclectic figure of Time on the west wall (Fig. 125), expressing various interrelated time concepts through composite iconography, is one of Salviati's original creations. Time's powerful, nude physiognomy and large wings relate to the contemporary *Tempus* image of printer's *imprese* and depictions of Time/Saturn in printed editions of the *Trionfi*.<sup>60</sup> Three human heads, representing youth,

<sup>58</sup> Nicola Ivanoff, "Allegorie dell'Odeon e della Loggia Cornaro a Padova," *Emporium*, Nov. 1963, 209–15. On Salviati's connection to the reliefs of the *Odeon Cornaro* and their subsequent influence in Venice, see Pierguidi (as in note 30), 4–9; on the Modena relief: Maria Papathanassiou, "On the Astronomical Explanation of Phanes's Relief at Modena," *Archaeoastronomy*, no. 16, *JHA*, xxii, 1991, 1–13, and my discussion in chapter 2.

<sup>59</sup> N. Ivanoff, *La Libreria Marciana, Saggi e Memorie di Storia dell'Arte*, vol. 6, 1968, 45–46, 165, figs. 6–9. Ivanoff's interpretation of the three animal heads as symbols of past, present and future (1968, 46), was based on Erwin Panofsky, "Titian's Allegory of Prudence," *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, New York, 1955, 149–51. My study of Titian's painting argues for a different interpretation specific to that context; see "Titian's London Allegory and the Three Beasts of his *Selva Oscura*," in Cohen (as in note 42), 165–93. Iris H. Cheney (as in note 48), 63, followed by Morel (as in note 49), 12, 16, and Pierguidi (as in note 51), 7, stress the connection of Salviati with Valeriano and the influence of his *Hieroglyphica*, in which the three-headed creature is explained as the three parts of time: *Hieroglyphica*, (edit. princ. Basel, 1556), Lyon, 1602, 51, 324 & 629. For interpretations of the astronomical elements of the Modena relief, see Papathanassiou (as in note 58), esp. 5–10.

<sup>60</sup> E.g. *Trionfo del Tempo*, woodcut from *Il Petrarca*, Giolito, Venice, 1543 (Fig. 57) that was contemporaneous with Salviati's commencement of work in the *Sala dell'Udienza*.



Fig. 125. Francesco Salviati, *Il Tempo*, Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, Sala dell'Udienza, 1544–1548. Photo: Paolo Tosi, su concessione dei Musei Civici Fiorentini.

advanced age and death, are attached to the torso.<sup>61</sup> From his raised right arm he pours water from one vase into a decorative jug below his feet. From a vase held in his lowered left arm water is flowing into an ornate amphora type receptacle below. The association with iconographical characteristics of *Nemesis* and *Temperanza* is obvious, despite the modification of gender in both cases. *Temperanza* in *Quattrocento* art not only diluted wine in one receptacle by pouring water from another but generally had large wings in the tarot series. In his description of the west wall Vasari wrote of the two images as “*due tempi, uno che aggiusta i pesi con le balance; e l'altro che temprà, versando l'aqua di due vasi l'uno nell'altro* (Two Times, one that adjusts the weights with the scales, and the other that tempers, pouring the water from two vases from one to another).<sup>62</sup> The ribbon *cartiglio* across the top of the painting has no extant inscription, but Salviati's intention has been hypothetically reestablished on the basis of a later drawing which completes the motto “*praeteritum (prae)sens futurum tempus*”.<sup>63</sup>

Salviati's allegorical program in the *Sala dell'Udienza* is an extraordinary demonstration of temporal concepts promoted by humanist ideals of the mid *Cinquecento* and of their applications in contemporary sovereign propaganda. Five different large-scale personifications, representing aspects of time and temporality, provide the leitmotif of the entire program. Salviati further developed the iconography of the *Kairos* figure as a key element in frescoes of the *Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti* in the Via Giulia (1552–54) and introduced a modified type of *Occasio* in the depiction of Virtues crowning Pope Paul III in the *Salotto dipinto* of the *Palazzo Farnese* (ca. 1552), both in Rome (Figs. 126 & 127).<sup>64</sup> The theme of *Truth Unveiled by Time* was even adopted for his program at the Oratory of *San Giovanni Decollato*, subtly framed in a cameo frame below a window (Fig. 128).

<sup>61</sup> Cf. The three-headed figure of *Tempus* as a satyr illustrated in Guillaume de la Perrière, *La Morosophie*, Lyons, 1553; see Samuel C. Chew, *The Pilgrimage of Life*, Port Washington, New York & London, 1973, fig. 31.

<sup>62</sup> Vasari (as in note 48), VII, 24.

<sup>63</sup> The drawing in the Teylers Museum, Haarlem is attributed to Machietti; a copy is in Turin. See Morel (as in note 49), 10, n. 35 & Pierguidi (as in note 51), 9, 13, n. 41.

<sup>64</sup> See Nova (as in note 51); Mortari (as in note 48), 122–23, 126–27; Michael Hirst, “Some Additions and Reflections,” in Catherine Monbeig Goguel, Philippe Costamagna & Michel Hochmann (eds.), *Francesco Salviati e la Bella Maniera*, (Actes des Colloques de Rome et de Paris, 1998), Rome, 2001, 69–89; Philippe Costamagna, “Le Mécénat et la Politique Culturelle du Cardinale Giovanni Salviati,” *Op. cit.* 217–52; Julian Kliemann, “L'immagine de Paolo III come Pacifatore,” *Op. cit.* 287–310.



Fig. 126. Francesco Salviati, *Kairos* (detail), fresco, Rome, *Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti*, 1552–1554.





Fig. 127. Francesco Salviati, *Occasio, Sapienza and other Virtues Crowning Pope Paul III*, fresco, Rome, Palazzo Farnese, ca. 1552.





Fig. 128. Francesco Salviati, *Truth Unveiled by Time*, fresco, Rome, *Oratorio di San Giovanni Decollato*, ca. 1550/51. Soprintendenza Speciale per il Patrimonio Storico, Artistico ed Etnoantropologico e per il Polo Museale della Città di Roma.

About the time of Salviati's later work at the Roman Oratory of *San Giovanni Decollato* both he and Vasari seem to have executed similar versions of an *Allegoria della Pazienza* (Fig. 129), which was commissioned from Vasari by Bernardo Minerbetti, the Bishop of Siena in a letter of 1551.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> See Rudolph Wittkower, "Patience and Chance: the Story of a Political Emblem," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, I, 1937–8, repr. 1987 (as in note 38), 108–112. For the versions of the Uffizi and the Galleria Palatina, see Julian Kliemann, in *Giorgio Vasari: Principi, letterati e artisti nelle carte di Giorgio Vasari* (Casa Vasari, Arezzo), exh. cat. edited by Laura Corti, Margaret Daly Davis, Charles Davis, and Julian Kliemann, Arezzo, 1981, 130–33 and Mortari (as in note 48), 121, cat. nos. 35 & 58. Liana de Girolami Cheney, "Giorgio Vasari's Patience: Astronomical Symbol of Time," in *The Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena*, ed. Raymond E. White, *Memorie: Journal of the Italian Astronomical Society* (2001–2002), 112–121, has written: "Giorgio Vasari's interest in the theme of 'Patience' extended to and incorporated classical and medieval texts. In the *Psychomachia*, Prudentius carefully studied the attitudes of this type of tormented spirit." Cheney noted that Cesare Ripa's third emblem of Patience describes Vasari's version as a woman who carefully watches the dripping of water, symbolizing that the individual needs to wait for things to materialize and achieve happiness as well as the passing of time. Cheney's study



Fig. 129. Giorgio Vasari, *Allegory of Patience*, after 1551, Florence, Palazzo Pitti, Galleria Palatina. Photo: Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino.

The slow elapse of time is represented by a large clepsydra crowned by a clock foliot. In Salviati's version (Uffizi inv. 1528) water from the clepsydra is discharged over a rock and then its stream is lost. *Pazienza*, in a state of melancholy introspection, seems to reflect over this uncontrollable flow of time. This version contrasts with the earlier Allegories of *Pazienza* painted by Vasari in the Palazzo Corner Spinelli, in Venice (1542), and the Refectory of the Monteoliveto monastery (1544–45), where *Pazienza*'s attribute is a yoke rather than a clepsydra.<sup>66</sup> The clepsydra and foliot had already been depicted in Giorgione's Castelfranco fresco, about half a century earlier, underlining the message of transience with the maxim *Territ omnia tempus*. There the clock foliot had represented Temperance or Prudence because it gave visual expression to the concept of regularity and was analogous to human self-discipline and perseverance. The didactic message of the earlier clepsydra depiction, abstracted in its still-life context, is now enhanced by the illustration of human experience and sentiment. The focus has shifted from a more speculative view of time, characteristic of early humanism, to a poignant homocentric reflection on man's psychological response to time.

### *Angelo Bronzino: Time and Moralization*

Unlike the contributions of Salviati, the monumental frescoes by Bronzino in the *Cappella d'Eleonora* (1540–45), and the huge *Martyrdom of St. Lawrence* in the Church of San Lorenzo (1569) are lacking in temporal motifs.

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demonstrates how Vasari used the technology of the period (astrolabe, water-clock and armillary sphere) to characterize time and how his versions of Patience embody humanistic issues, absorb the emblematic tradition, and reflect the cultural milieu of the time: Cheney, *Giorgio Vasari's Teachers: Sacred and Profane Art*, New York, 2007, 169–72.

<sup>66</sup> See Jurgen Schulz, "Vasari at Venice," *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 103, no. 705, Dec. 1961, 500–11, esp. 504, fig. 20 & 507; Liana De Girolami Cheney, "Giorgio Vasari and Naples: the Monteolivetan Order," in *Parthenope's Splendor: Art of the Golden age in Naples*, eds. Jeanne Chenault Porter and Susa Scott, Munshower, Papers in Art History, The Pennsylvania State University, 1994, 97–120 and "Giorgio Vasari's Venetian Decorative Cycle II: The Cornaro Ceiling," *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, Summer 2003, 23–59.

The personification of Time, however, related to *Cinquecento* illustrations of the *Trionfo del Tempo*, played a major role in the *Allegory* painted for Duke Cosimo I and then sent as a gift to François I (Fig. 130), and in his design for the tapestry of *Justice Liberating Innocence* (Figs. 131 & 132), both dating to about 1545.<sup>67</sup>

Bronzino's *London Allegory* is clearly geared to moralization and, as an intimate painting of a poetic nature, does not convey an explicitly propagandist message. It focuses on the nude figures of Venus and her son Cupid revealed in an incestuous relationship. *Father Time* aided by the figure of *Truth* is seen above as he exposes this wanton spectacle by drawing back a curtain. A golden haired boy on one side is juxtaposed with a tortured syphilitic on the other. But the main protagonist, the monstrous personification of *Fraud*, offering honey in one hand and a poisonous scorpion in the other, is hidden in the shadows. As a satirical social satire, related to his burlesque poetry, the painting would have appealed to the eroticizing fantasy and wit of his recipient. At the same time it bears a powerful message of social and moral critique as it speaks out against duplicity and deception. Both the *London Allegory* and the *Justice Liberating Innocence* tapestry illustrate the modification of the *Veritas filia temporis* theme into that of Time exposing sin and fighting corruption by revealing truth. It has been suggested, that the two consequently constitute a cohesive pair and that both convey political interpretations, based on the claim that Aretino introduced the *Veritas filia temporis* conceit from the *Attic Nights* to commemorate the political triumph of Alessandro de' Medici, having achieved his alliance with Charles V through marriage.<sup>68</sup> In my estimation this argument is unnecessarily stretching a point, first of all because we are dealing with two different artistic genres, a small painting presumably intended for the intimate contemplation of the patron, as opposed to a large tapestry for public exhibit in the ducal palace. In the *London Allegory* Time is exposing social and sexual immorality. There appears to be no tacit political message.

This is not the case with the tapestry (Fig. 132). The animal symbolism, as interpreted in my previous study, is traditionally associated with three

<sup>67</sup> See Cohen (as in note 42), "The Ambivalent Scorpio in Bronzino's London Allegory," 263–290; for earlier scholarship regarding this painting and a comprehensive bibliography thereof, see 266, n. 5.

<sup>68</sup> See Lynette M.F. Bosch, "Time, Truth & Destiny: some Iconographical Themes in Bronzino's 'Primavera' and 'Giustizia,'" *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz*, vol. 27, 1983, 73–82.



Fig. 130. Angelo Bronzino, *Allegory*, ca. 1545, London, National Gallery.





Fig. 131. Angelo Bronzino, modello for tapestry *Justice Liberating Innocence*, ca. 1545/46, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, F.261, inf. No. 65, fol. 61. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana—Milano/De Agostini Picture Library.



Fig. 132. *Justice Liberating Innocence*, tapestry woven by Jan Rost (Brussels), based on Bronzino's design & cartoon, Florence, Palazzo Pitti, Depositi Arazzi, Arazzi no. 539. Photo: Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino.

vices.<sup>69</sup> The dog, as an attribute of *Luxuria* (Lust or Lechery); the wolf, a traditional symbol of *Avaritia* (Greed), and the lion of *Superbia* (Pride) accompanied by a hissing serpent, all threaten the figure of *Innocence*. The dynamic figure of *Giustizia* is aided by *Father Time* and *Veritas*, his daughter, in triumphing over the vices. Surely, the armored *Giustizia* with sword and scales represents the just rule of Cosimo, who is frequently armored in his portraits. How apt is Bronzino's representation of him as *deus ex machina*. It has been claimed by several authors that Bronzino derived his design for the tapestry from a preparatory drawing by Salviati.<sup>70</sup> Although his drawing of *Father Time* and *Truth* have nothing in common with Salviati's style or conception, the inspiration for including Time in this allegory may indeed be due to Salviati.

One of Bronzino's last works was the so-called *Allegory of Happiness* (Fig. 133), a small oil painting on tin, which was probably made for Cosimo's son, Francesco I de' Medici.<sup>71</sup> The main subject was already described in three *Cinquecento* sources—by Vasari in his *Zifaldone*, Vincenzo Cartari in his *Imagini degli Dei de gli antichi* (1556), and Cesare Ripa in the *Iconologia* (1593). Vasari identified the main figure of what may or may not be the same painting as "*Felicità, una donna vestita, con un corno di dovizia nella sinistra, et un caduceo di Mercurio nella destra*" (Happiness, a clothed woman, with a cornucopia in the left [hand] and a caduceus in the right).<sup>72</sup> Cartari identified *Felicitas* as a daughter of Hercules, and described her as:

<sup>69</sup> Cohen (as in note 42), "Titian's London Allegory and the Three Beasts of his *Selva Oscura*," 165–93.

<sup>70</sup> See Catherine Monbeig-Goguel, "Salviati, Bronzino et 'La Vengeance de l'Innocence,'" *Revue de l'art*, 1976, vol. 31, 33–37; Janet Cox-Rearick, *Bronzino's Chapel of Eleonora in the Palazzo Vecchio*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1993, fig. 102 & ref. 161; Bosch (as in note 68), 78, figs. 5 & 6.

<sup>71</sup> See Luciano Berti, *Il principe dello Studiolo. Francesco I dei Medici e la fine del Rinascimento Fiorentino*, Florence, 1967, 282; Marco Collareta, in *Firenze e la Toscana dei Medici nell'Europa del Cinquecento. Palazzo Vecchio: committenza e collezionismo medicei, 1573–1610*, exh. cat., Milan & Florence, 1980, 274, no. 517; Graham Smith, "Bronzino's Allegory of Happiness," *Art Bulletin*, vol. 66, 1984, 390–99; Alessandro Cecchi, *Agnolo Bronzino*, Florence, 1996; Eng. trans. by Christopher Evans, Florence & New York, 1996., 72; Maurice Brock, *Bronzino*, Paris, 2002, 236–37; Antonio Geremicca, in Carlo Falciani & Antonio Natali (eds.), *Bronzino. Artist and Poet at the Court of the Medici*, exh. cat. Florence, Palazzo Strozzi, 24 Sept 2010–23 Jan 2011; Firenze, 2010, 148–49. Graham Smith (*op. cit.*), 394, identified the protagonists and interpreted the program as the achievement of happiness through the exercise of prudence and justice, and its long duration thanks to Time, who captures the propitious moment offered by Chance/Fortune and prolongs its effects through the conquests of *Kairos*.

<sup>72</sup> *Lo Zifaldone di Giorgio Vasari*, ed. A. Del Vita, Rome, 1938, 9. See *Giorgio Vasari*, exh. cat. by L. Corti et al., 1981, (as in note 65), cat. no. 33, 137–38; in the entry P.T. Baxter suggests that Bronzino's painting is a simplified version of an *Allegory of Happiness* described





Fig. 133. Angelo Bronzino, *Allegory of Happiness*, ca. 1567/68, Florence, *Galleria degli Uffizi*, inv. 1890 no. 1543. Photo: Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino.

*“una donna sopra un bel seggio, che tiene nella destra il Caduceo, et ha nella sinistra un corno di dovittia. Si può dire che quello significhi la virtù, questo le ricchezze come che, ne le virtù da se, ne le ricchezze per loro medesime possono fare qui l’uomo felice.”*<sup>73</sup> Cartari’s description had already inspired the image of *Felicità* painted by Paolo Veronese in the Villa Barbaro (Maser, 1560–61) and the allegory had appeared on a medal made by Domenico Poggini for Francesco de’ Medici (1564), but neither of these included the figure of Time. According to Ripa, the particular iconography represented the concepts of *Felicità Publica* and *Felicità Eterna*, as opposed to short-lived *Felicità Breve*, the latter compared to a quickly rotting pumpkin. Under the title *Felicità Eterna*, he described a *“Giovane ignuda, con le trecchie d’oro, coronata di Lauro, sia bella, e riplendente, sederà sopra il Cielo stellato, tenendo una palma nella sinistra mano, e nella destra una fiamma di fuoco, alzando gli occhi in alto, con segni di allegrezza.”*<sup>74</sup> The caduceus, sign of peace, wisdom and virtue, the cornucopia full of fruit, indication of bodily and spiritual riches, and the flowers of *“allegrezza”* are further mentioned in the section on *Felicità Publica*.

Among Cesare Ripa’s interpretations of *Felicità* we find the first reference to the theme of time, not mentioned in this context either by Vasari or Cartari: *“Ponsi a sedere sopra il cielo stellato, per dimostrare, che la vera felicità, che solo in Cielo si gode, non è soggetta a rapido corso delle stele, e allo scambievole movimento de’ tempi”* ([She is] seated above the starry sky in order to demonstrate that true happiness, that is only exalted in the heavens, is not subject to the rapid course of the stars, or the changing movement of time). The idyllic conception that Eternal (i.e. public) Happiness, unaffected by the vicissitudes of time, is consonant with the traditional propagandist themes of Medici emblems and *imprese*. Bronzino’s painting, however, preceded the publication of Ripa’s text, with its reference to time, by about twenty-six years. One wonders whether Ripa was

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in the third book of Cosimo Bartoli’s *Ragionamenti accademici... sopra alcuni luoghi difficili di Dante. Con alcune inventioni e significati*, Venice, 1567, 48b–54a.

<sup>73</sup> “A woman on a beautiful seat, who holds in her right [hand] the caduceus and in the left a horn of plenty. It may be said that that signifies virtue, and this the riches, as if to say not by virtues themselves, nor by riches moreover can man be made happy” Vincenzo Cartari, *Imagini degli Dei de gli antichi*, 1556, 1647 ed., Graz, 1963, 255–56; Vincenzo Cartari’s *Images of the Gods of the Ancients: The First Italian Mythography*, trans. John Mulryan, ACMRS, Tempe AZ, 2012.

<sup>74</sup> “A naked youth, with braids of gold, crowned with Laurel. She is beautiful, and resplendent, will sit above the starry sky, holding a palm in her left hand and a flame in her right, raising her eyes above, with signs of happiness.”



inspired by Bronzino's conception of *Felicità* and actually described what he saw in the painted allegory.

Evidence for the use of Roman numismatic sources in depicting this theme was already presented by Vasari, Cartari and Ripa, who specifically referred to coins of *Felicitas Publica* minted for the Roman Empress Julia Mamaea, (after 180–235 C.E.), where the goddess is seated and holds the caduceus and cornucopia.<sup>75</sup> Several Roman temples had been devoted to *Felicitas* in the second century B.C., and this goddess began to appear on Roman coins, as a standard imperial attribute to compliment the image of the emperor from the reign of Galba (68–69 A.D.), accompanied by the motto *Felicitas Temporum* (the Felicity/Prosperity of the Times) or *Felicitas Publica*. The *felicitas* of the emperor himself originally expressed a military ideal but was later applied to the happiness of the age, the community and the individual. The motto *perpetua felicitas res publicae* was used during the reign of Augustus as *Pater Patriae* (Father of the Fatherland),<sup>76</sup> the title subsequently adopted for Cosimo il Vecchio. Cosimo I was frequently cast in the role of Augustus and the conceit of Bronzino's painting would therefore be an obvious allusion to this identification, especially considering that his profile seems to have been inserted as the male side of *Prudenza*.<sup>77</sup> The idea of the emperor's personal role in securing the *felicitas temporum*, the current Golden Age, had become a standard conceit by the second century,<sup>78</sup> and Renaissance collectors of antiquities were obviously familiar with the numismatic iconography of *Felicitas* holding the *cornucopia* and *caduceus*, as well as the use of these same attributes to illustrate the motto *Pax* on imperial coins of the same period.<sup>79</sup> It should be noted, however, that none of these coins had visual references of any kind to the theme of time.

<sup>75</sup> See Smith (as in note 71), 3, Fig. 2.

<sup>76</sup> See Carlos F. Noreña, *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West, Representation, Circulation, Power*, Cambridge (UK), New York, 2011, 165–68, 190, fig. 327. The *Pater Patriae* title was first conferred on Marcus Furius Camillus (c. 390 B.C.E.), which is another indication of the identification between this Roman hero and early Medici rule.

<sup>77</sup> Bandinelli, Cellini, Danti, and Giambologna, sculpted Cosimo as Augustus. For a study of how Augustan images were deployed in relation to Cosimo and Charles V, see Paul Richelson, *Studies in the Personal Imagery of Cosimo I de' Medici, Duke of Florence*, New York: Garland, 1978, 28–30; also Roger J. Crum, "Cosmos, the World of Cosimo: The Iconography of the Uffizi Façade," *Art Bulletin*, vol. 71, 1989, 237–253 and Henk (as in note 47).

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 167.

<sup>79</sup> See these depictions, for example, on coins of Vespasian (69–79 C.E.) and Hadrian (117–138 C.E.) in M. McMahon, *Happiness*, New York, 2006, 68–70.

Auxiliary roles in Bronzino's little painting are played by the personifications of *Prudence* on the left, two-faced and holding the world globe, *Justice/Truth* on the right, naked with sword and scales, and four or five figures representing vices and folly, who have been subjugated by *Father Time* and *Occasio*. *Father Time*, oddly lacking his usual wings and hour-glass, is located in the temporal sphere below, as he grasps the star-studded heavenly globe (cf. Ripa's *cielo stellato*) to arrest the movement of the stars. Facing him, *Occasio* has arrested the flow of time and fortune by inactivating the rotation of her wheel.

Bronzino, by expanding the basic iconography, introduced the temporal connotations in keeping with contemporary conceptions of sovereign power. In other words, we are meant to comprehend that the Medici ruler would assure his Florentine subjects lasting wealth and good fortune, peace and security, fecundity and felicity, unaffected by the course of the stars and the movements of time. As in his previous allegory, Bronzino's Time was a powerful collaborator in combating vice and promoting the virtues of Cosimo's rule. In 1584/85, about twenty years after Bronzino's *Allegory of Happiness*, Annibale Caracci augmented the implications by combining the iconography of *Felictas Publica* with that of *Veritas filia Temporis* in an *Allegory of Truth and Time* (Fig. 134).

Orazio Gentileschi adopted the *Felicità Pubblica* allegory during a visit to France between 1624 and 1626. The painting, intended for the Palais de Luxembourg (now Louvre) contains references to the French monarchy and to Maria de' Medici, in particular. The *Veritas filia Temporis* theme would again serve Medici propaganda, when Rubens depicted Maria de' Medici reconciled with her son Louis XIII above the hovering figure of aged Time, who lifts up his well endowed daughter *Veritas*, triumphant in her nakedness (Fig. 135).<sup>80</sup> The adaptability of the *Veritas filia Temporis* theme to various forms of political, moral and religious propaganda was demonstrated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, primarily by Italian artists and their French followers. Versions of the *Veritas filia Temporis* imagery would be painted by Domenico Zampieri (Domenichino), in collaboration with Agostino Tassi, for the ceiling of the Palazzo Costaguti, Rome (ca. 1620); Sebastiano Ricci (1659–1734) in the Palazzo Bru Zane, Venice; Nicholas Poussin for Cardinal Richelieu's 'grand cabinet'

<sup>80</sup> For 16th–18th c. examples of the *Veritas filia Temporis* theme in painting, see: <http://riowang.blogspot.com/2010/09/veritas-filia-dei-3-time-and-truth.html>. The theme was also depicted in 17th c. sculpture; e.g. the free-standing statue by Joachim Henne, ca. 1670, Copenhagen, Nationalmuseet.



Fig. 134. [COL. PL. 15] Annibale Caracci, *Allegory of Truth and Time*, 1584/85, London, Hampton Court Royal Collection. Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2013.

in Paris (ca. 1641); Giovanni Battista Pittoni the Younger in an *Allegory of Time and Beauty* (ca. 1720s); Jean-François Detroy in *Time Unveiling Truth* (1733); Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, in several monumental allegories (ca. 1743–1758) (Fig. 136),<sup>81</sup> and Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his Italian sketchbook (1752).<sup>82</sup>

### *Giorgio Vasari: Time Recruited*

Around the same period that Salviati initiated his project for the Medici in the *Sala dell' Udienza* (1543), an *Allegory of Justice* was commissioned from Vasari by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese for the *sala* of the *Cancelleria* Palace in Rome (Fig. 137). As Liana De Girolami Cheney has shown, the

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 6–9.

<sup>82</sup> See Erna Mandowsky, “Reynold’s Conceptions of Truth,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, vol. 77, no. 453, Dec. 1940, 195–97 & 201.

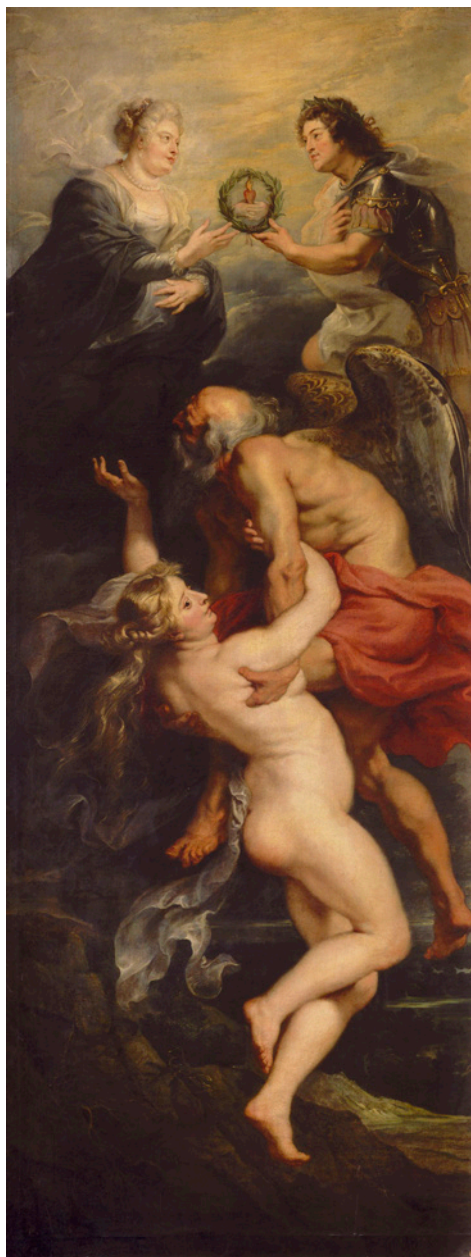


Fig. 135. Peter Paul Rubens, *Maria de' Medici and Louis XIII with the Allegory Veritas filia temporis*, 1622–1625, ex. Luxembourg Palace, Paris, Musée du Louvre. Photo RMN.



Fig. 136. Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, *Allegory of Truth and Time*, drawing, pen and wash over black chalk, ca. 1696–70. Rogers Fund, 1937, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image Source: Art Resource, N.Y.





Fig. 137. Giorgio Vasari, *Allegory of Justice*, 1543, Naples, Museo di Capodimonte. Per gentile concessione della Fototeca della Soprintendenza. Per il P.S.A.E. e per il Polo Museale della Città di Napoli.

iconography was described by Vasari both in his *ricordanze* and in a letter to Cardinal Farnese.<sup>83</sup> In the *ricordo* he describes a drawing presented to the Cardinal, upon which the painting was based: "Justice has seven vices in golden chains tied to her girdle and keeps them prisoners. Below her are Corruption, Ignorance, Cruelty, Fear and Treason.<sup>84</sup> Above Falsehood and Slander is a nude female representing Truth, an image of purity, virtue and devotion, who is presented by Time. Justice is placing an oak wreath on Truth's head. She is embracing an ostrich laden with the twelve Tables [of the Law], many *putti* carry arms to arm and defend Justice, as seen in the drawing."<sup>85</sup> Vasari's letter provides further details of the *invenzione*, referring again to the vices interlocked with "Truth, who is presented by Time, her father, she donates doves as a simple tribute. Justice honors her with an oaken crown, representing her spiritual Fortitude". Among the Renaissance precedents for Vasari's personification of Justice that designed by Raphael, and probably executed by Giulio Romano in the *Sala di Constantino* (Vatican, 1520–24), should be noted. Justice is similarly positioned there with her hand on the adjacent ostrich to her right. Other visual sources, such as Roman reliefs portraying the Goddess *Roma*, particularly that on the base of the column of Antoninus Pius and Faustina, were discussed by Cheney.<sup>86</sup> But none of those mentioned include the additional protagonists of Vasari's painting, namely the tortuous vices or the benevolent figures that illustrate *Time* and *Truth*.

Vasari decorated the rooms of his home, the *Casa Vasari* in Arezzo (1541–1554), with a combination of biblical and mythological programs

<sup>83</sup> See Alessandro del Vita, *Le Ricordanze di Giorgio Vasari*, Roma, R. Istituto Archeologico e Storia dell'Arte, 1938, 41, for the description of *Ricordo* no. 40; Karl Frey, *Der Literarische Nachlass Giorgio Vasari*, I, Munich, 1923, 121–22 and Liana De Girolami Cheney, "Giorgio Vasari's *Astraea*: A Symbol of Justice," *Visual Resources*, vol. 19, no. 4, 2003, 283–305, esp. 291–92.

<sup>84</sup> The commission for this painting was obtained for Vasari by the historian, physician and art collector Paolo Giovio, who also advised him on iconographic matters. The Florentine artist Lucca Penni adopted this allegory of Justice in his series of prints depicting Justice and the Seven Deadly Sins, etched by Léon Davent around the mid 16th century, but did not include Time and Truth or Raphael's ostrich and increased the militant aspect. See Kathleen Wilson Chevalier, "Sebastian Brant: The Key to Understanding Luca Penni's Justice and the Seven Deadly Sins," *Art Bulletin*, vol. 78, no. 2, June 1996, 236–63, esp. 260–62, fig. 23.

<sup>85</sup> Trans. by Cheney (as in note 83), 291–92. Regarding the ostrich as a symbol of Justice, see 295–97 & 304, n. 49 and Vasari's preparatory drawing: fig. 2. Forthcoming is Una Roman D'Elia's *Raphael's Ostrich: Allegory and Ambiguity in Cinquecento Florentine and Roman Art*.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 295.

that reflect humanistic learning and the myriad sources of *Cinquecento* classicism.<sup>87</sup> It is significant that the most complex symbolism is found in the so-called *Chamber of Fortune*, where an *Allegory of Fortune, Envy and Virtue* on the ceiling is framed by personifications of the four seasons as the four ages of man, planetary gods and signs of the zodiac (Fig. 138).<sup>88</sup> The central composition is thematically and formally related to *Cinquecento* allegorical precedents, such as Caroto's *Veritas filia temporis* (1524–30) (Fig. 119) in Verona, and Marcolini's *Veritas impresa* (1536) (Fig. 114), although it is *Fortuna-Occasio* grasped by her forelock, rather than Father Time as *deus ex machina*, who is the major protagonist here. Liana Cheney has emphasized that "Vasari's decorations contain theological, philosophical, historical and didactic schema", with "a general underlying philosophy that gives unity and meaning to the various allegories, personifications and *istorie*".<sup>89</sup> One might assume, nevertheless, that the idea of actively grasping at *occasio pars temporis*, or controlling this element of temporal flux, was more meaningful to the young artist than the more abstract philosophical idea of triumphant time. The fact that the elderly Saturn, reclining on the exterior of the same ceiling, is portrayed with his chronometer, the hourglass of time, underscores the temporal context.<sup>90</sup>

In his subsequent work for the Medici in the Palazzo Vecchio (1560s), and most notable on the ceiling of the *Terrace of Saturn*, Vasari adopted a mythographic tradition in his depictions of Time/Saturn, the *Horae* and the Four Ages of Man.<sup>91</sup>

All of these depictions were entirely secular and antiquarian in nature, but his last personification of Time was curiously introduced into a sacred iconographic context.

On the interior of Brunelleschi's dome of *Santa Maria del Fiore* Vasari designed a nude and winged Father Time raising his broken hourglass to indicate that time has stopped at the *Last Judgment* (Fig. 139). His gesture of defeat is directed towards a personification of the Militant Church above, who has shed her armor and is being crowned as the Church Triumphant.

<sup>87</sup> See Liana De Girolami Cheney, *The Homes of Giorgio Vasari*, New York, 2006.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 33, 119–140, 154–58.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 154.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, figs. 32 & 33.

<sup>91</sup> See M.W. Gahtan, "Giorgio Vasari and the Image of the Hour," *The Inspirations of Astronomical Phenomena VI*, ASP Conference Series, 2010, 3–13, esp. 7–9.



Fig. 138. Giorgio Vasari, *Allegory of Fortune, Envy and Virtue*, painting on wood, 1548, Arezzo, The Chamber of Fortune, Casa Vasari.



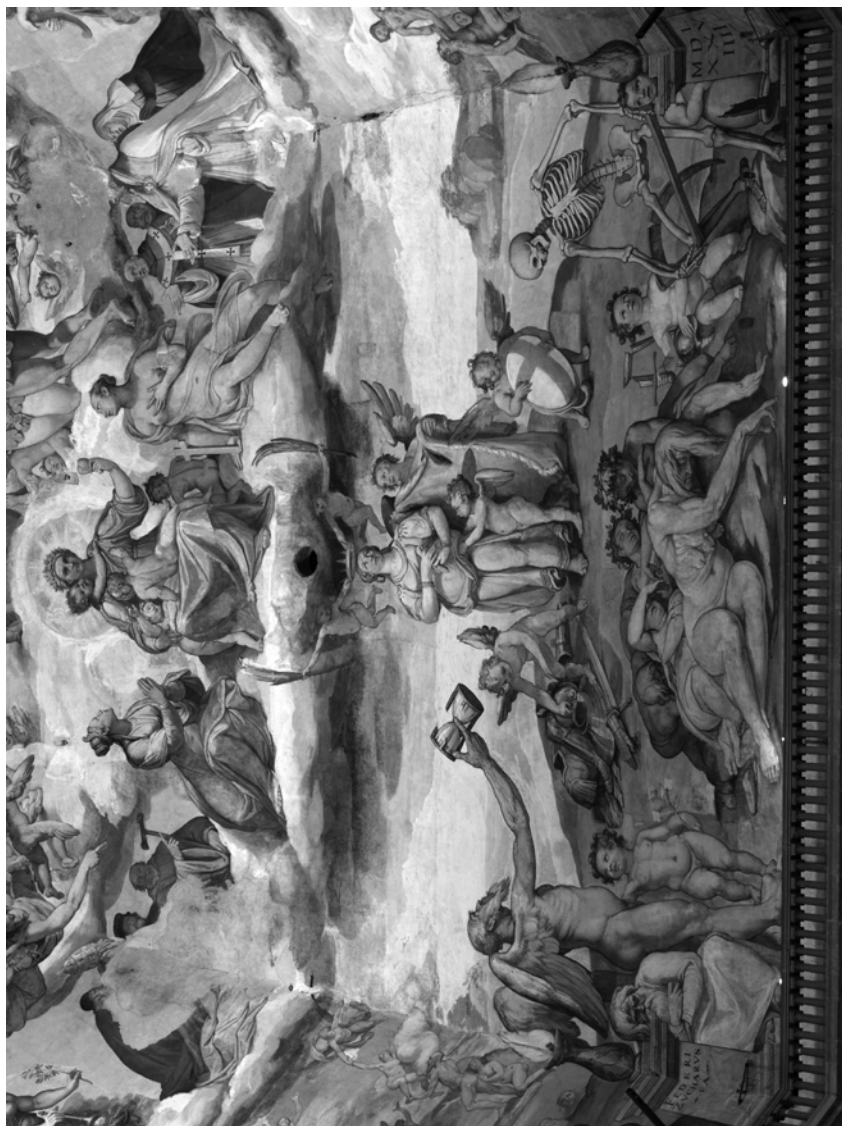


Fig. 139. [COL. PL. 16] Giorgio Vasari and Federico Zuccaro, Time in the *Last Judgment* (detail), fresco, 1574–79, Florence, dome of the Cathedral, *Santa Maria del Fiore*.



The personifications of Time and Death are relegated to Hell in the lowest circle, below the segments of the seven mortal sins. The rotation of the globe on which Christ stands has also been stopped by a little angel. The painting of the dome was begun by Vasari in 1574 and completed after his death between 1576 and 1579 by Federico Zuccaro. Letters from the Benedictine advisor Vincenzo Borghini (1515–1580) to Vasari record that he devised the program and invented the iconography of arrested Time.<sup>92</sup> On a sketch for the tombs of the *Magnifici* in the *Cappella Medici* of San Lorenzo (ca. 1521) Michelangelo's had written: "*la Fama tiene gli epitaffi a giacere; non va né inanzi né indietro, perché son morti e el loro operare é fermo*",<sup>93</sup> echoing Petrarch's "*né 'sia' né 'fu', né 'mai', né 'inanzi', o 'indietro' che umana vita fanno varia e 'nferma'*".<sup>94</sup> The concept of time's arrest was immanent in the eschatological doctrine of the *Final Judgment Day*,<sup>95</sup> but Michelangelo had not provided a visual precedent. Furthermore, although the *Veritas filia temporis* theme had been widely adopted in northern artistic propaganda,<sup>96</sup> alternatively celebrating the triumph of

<sup>92</sup> For the letters, see Cesare Guasti, *La Cupola di Santa Maria del Fiore*, Florence, 1857; For iconographical analysis, see Timothy Verdon, "The Rediscovery of 'The Last Judgement'. The Restoration of the Frescoes in the Dome of Santa Maria del Fiore," 25–44. Suppl. al n° 24 di *Toscana Oggi* del 25 giugno 1995; "Immagini della controriforma. L'iconografia dell'area liturgica di Santa Maria del Fiore," in F. Gheri, V. Gelli (eds.), *La cupola di Santa Maria del Fiore. Storia, restauro, immagine*, Firenze, 1997, 193–206, and Marcia Hall, *After Raphael*, Cambridge, UK, 1999, 250.

<sup>93</sup> "Fame holds the epitaphs in a horizontal position because they are dead and their activity stopped, it doesn't go forward or back", trans. Creighton Gilbert; for other translations see his "Texts and Contexts of the Medici Chapel," *Art Quarterly*, vol. 34, 1971, 393–96. The pen sketch for a double tomb (London, British Museum) is widely reproduced; e.g. Howard Hibbard, *Michelangelo*, New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London, 1974, fig. 122; Estelle Lingo, "The Evolution of Michelangelo's Magnifici Tomb: Program versus Process in the Iconography of the Medici Chapel," *Artibus et historiae*, vol. 16, no. 32, 1995, 91–100, esp. 96, fig. 7 and Maia Wellington Gahtan, "Michelangelo and the Tomb of Time: the Intellectual Context of the Medici Chapel," *Studi di Storia dell'Arte*, vol. 13, 2002, 59–109, esp. 70–72, fig. 18.

<sup>94</sup> "No 'shall be' or 'has been', 'never' or 'before', or 'after', filling life with doubtfulness." *Trionfo dell'Èternità*, lines 32–33. Cf. "*Qual meraviglia ebb'io, quando ristare vidi in un punto quel che mai non stette, ma discorrendo suol tutto cangiare.*" (Greatly I marveled, seeing time itself come to an end, that never before had ceased, but had been wont in its course to change all things), *ibid.*, lines 25–27.

<sup>95</sup> E.g. "Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." *Luke* 12:4–5, 49.

<sup>96</sup> Saxl (as note 16), 202–15; Frederick Kiefer, "The Iconography of Time in the Winter's Tale," *Renaissance and Reformation*, vol. XXIII, 3, 1999, 49–64, esp. 56, and Parr (as in note 17), 445–47.

Protestant Reformation or that of Catholicism as the True Faith, the figure of Father Time alone had no precedent in sacred art. It is noteworthy that the nullification of time should be brought to the fore in the context of Counter-Reformation propagandist iconography, admitting Father Time by the back door, together with his ally Death, into the sacred context of *The Last Judgment*.

## EPILOGUE

In his book *Technics and Civilization* (1934) Lewis Mumford stated that “no two cultures live conceptually in the same kind of time and space”. An aspect of this broad supposition is examined in the present studies. In exploring the changing conceptions of time expressed in medieval and Renaissance visual arts, we have seen the different ways in which movements (literally and figuratively) of cultural and intellectual history helped shape attitudes.

Of no less significance to the art-historian is the independent expression of temporal concepts in the visual arts. Visual expressions of these concepts and attitudes were rarely literal illustrations of texts. The reverse process was demonstrated, for example, by the *rota* diagrams in medieval computistic and cosmological manuscripts, which were frequently created before the texts, the latter functioning as explications thereof. The initial illustrations to Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo* had very little to do with the text that had been created about sixty years earlier. Furthermore, the iconographic formulation of the theme was continuously modified in accordance with contemporary cultural, intellectual and technological developments. Indeed, one must take into account that Petrarch's text was extremely scholarly and introspectively philosophical, whereas the early illustrators, who at best were of limited theoretical education, were endeavoring to express concepts of time in mundane terms. While these precedents provided the models for later illustrations, modifications in their iconography were more likely to reflect contemporary viewpoints and sentiments than renewed interpretations of Petrarch's text.

This chronological overview of time in the visual arts of western culture has underlined milestones of iconographical and conceptual innovation without undermining the weight of precedents and traditions. Questions of continuity and change in the relationship of what we distinguish as medieval and Renaissance cultures are continuously reassessed through the focus on time. While investigating medieval precedents, a major issue addressed was the absence of an anthropomorphic time-image before the fifteenth century. In view of the prolific adoption of abstract personifications in medieval art, a personification of the concept of Time *per se* was conspicuously lacking. In seeking an explanation, we have referred to the early influence of St. Augustine and other doctors of the Church, who postulated that the temporal state in human consciousness was a malevolent

factor and obstacle to spirituality, abetting the denial of value in time-bound phenomena, and provoking the negation of a time concept *per se*.

Another approach to aspects of time was represented by early medieval scholars who transmitted the Roman cosmological heritage, forming the basis of early medieval astronomy and computistical literature. Schematic cosmic diagrams, primarily of the *rota* form, became an inseparable part of these texts. The twelfth century brought a revival of Greek philosophical and scientific sources, fostering a more critical, empirical approach. Time was perceived in terms of the natural world, leading to the formulation of an independent time dimension that could be abstracted from events and precisely calculated. Medieval cosmic diagrams, evoking the relationship between a cosmic personification or deity and the universal dimensions of time and space, demonstrated initial efforts to organize Christian ideas of temporal domination, duration and periodicity within a comprehensive universal structure. They reflected the relationships of cosmological and theological theories, and demonstrated the duality of time and eternity.

The increasing emphasis on time in the twelfth century has been demonstrated in the study of the zodiac on Romanesque church portals. The ubiquitous discussions of time in the patristic literature of the twelfth century, as demonstrated in hexaemeral commentaries on the fourth day of Creation, exegetical texts, doctrinal and historiographic literature, illustrated the inherent connection between cosmic time, as a divine creation, and stellar constellations in Christian thought. It has been argued that the architectural context of the constellations on the church portal symbolized the spiritual transition from a temporal state on earth to an eternal one in heaven, reflecting a new awareness of the time dimension and a changing perception of temporality.

An unprecedented emphasis on the idea of human transmutation, temporal deterioration and death was illustrated in proto-Renaissance art. Although artists were depicting mechanical clocks in religious and secular allegorical contexts by the fourteenth century, those modern chronometers did not express the subjective and internal experiences of biological and psychological time. Consequently, the subjective experience of time was illustrated by states of transition, as in images of decomposing cadavers and other morbid representations of human transience. The depictions of transitional states, of physical corruption and decay, marked a turning point in the conception of temporality.

The formation of a concrete visual image of Time in *Quattrocento* illustrations to Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo* constituted a definitive statement

about time as an objective entity and reflected a new attitude towards temporality as a significant dimension of existence. Contrary to previous assumptions, based on Erwin Panofsky's "Father Time", it has been demonstrated that these images did not illustrate Petrarch's *Trecento* text in any literal sense. Petrarch had not described a personification of time, and the image of Father Time on a chariot led by stags was the invention of *Quattrocento* illustrators. The fact that neither the early personification nor his attributes were copied or influenced by classical precedents, again contradicts a theory that has been uncritically quoted for over seventy years.

In the earliest illustrations of the mid *Quattrocento*, the personification of Time, pictured as an aged man with wings and crutches, constituted an innovative break-through. But models for the entire composition were influenced by medieval diagrams that depicted parallels between the macrocosm and microcosm in temporal terms. Time in the *Trionfo* image was similarly conceived as the moving spirit of the macrocosm and microcosm. The four elements, which had represented the material world and the physical aspect of temporal flux in cosmic diagrams, corresponded in both position and meaning to those in the *Trionfo del Tempo* illustrations. By the second decade of *Trionfi* illustrations the thematic emphasis was transferred from the macrocosm to the microcosm, from time as a central cosmic force to time as a factor in human existence. A decade later we find an eclectic combination of cyclic and linear motifs, readapted from antique and medieval sources. New images demonstrated corruption and decay inflicted on man by time. During the late *Quattrocento* the hourglass replaced the mechanical clock, illustrating a discontinuous and finite period of time, and details of landscape were increasingly employed to symbolize the process of generation, growth and decay. The diffusion of printed illustrations after 1500 resulted in the increased standardization of the traditional Florentine iconography, but a Venetian woodcut of 1508 first conflated Time and Saturn. Towards the mid sixteenth century Time underwent another metamorphosis initiated by Venetian printed editions of the *Trionfo*; he became a muscular nude devouring his children, his crutches replaced by weapons. By the late sixteenth century, over a century after his prelude, Time completed his transformation from a decrepit and helpless old man into a powerful monster.

Another iconographic expression of time, concurrently diffused in didactic and scholarly contexts, has highlighted moralistic implications. Focusing on the theme of time and temporality in relation to virtues and vices, the Castelfranco fresco reflected didactic tendencies in late



*Quattrocento* humanism. Moralizations were conveyed through the juxtapositions of temporal symbols, differentiating between transience and corruption, on one hand, and the concept of virtuousness, on the other. The idea of temporality had not entirely shed the negative connotations of medieval speculation, but the connection between practical action and ethical values vindicated a positive time dimension.

The revived concept of propitious time and emphasis on its practical utilization represented a turning point that found visual expression in the secular and pragmatic adaption of the *Kairos* theme. Early Renaissance humanists resuscitated the literary sources, while describing and interpreting the classical *topos* and image of *Kairos*. The most famous application of the *Kairos-Occasio* theme to early *Cinquecento* political propaganda was that of Niccolò Machiavelli. In his satirical and pragmatic recapitulation of the theme, *Penitenza*, no longer the medium of spiritual redemption, was ironically cast as an image of the procrastinator's repentance. By the late fifteenth century moralistic connotations of the late medieval *Kairos* allegory were replaced by secular and politically oriented interpretations. The personification, restored to its Greco-Roman form, was restructured into contemporary contexts with humanistic, political and moral implications. Related allegories of temporality were among the precedents that evolved into mid *Cinquecento* propagandist allegories of time, restoring the image of *Kairos* to its former glory in the iconographic programs of Cosimo I de' Medici.

The motto *Vertias filia temporis*, quoted in the *Antologia Greca*, one of the most influential classical sources of Renaissance emblematic literature, was introduced by printers and typographers in their devices or printer's marks, thereby promoting its diffusion in other media. From the 1530s the conceit of Truth exposed or revealed by Time was widely adopted to manifest religious, moral, political or social critique. It is noteworthy that this conception of Time as a kind of *Deus ex machina* and the conflated image of Time/Saturn in *Trionfi* illustrations were popularized during the same period. Although their functions were different, both allegories emphasized the inescapable potency of the nude, muscular figure that had come to represent Time.

Giulio Romano concurrently introduced various temporal personifications in his monumental vault of the *Camera dei Giganti*. Chronos is flanked by *bifrons* Janus, who held the key to beginnings and ends, *Kairos/Occasio*, the transient opportune moment, and *Prudence*, who wisely charted the future on the basis of past experience and would therefore catch *Kairos* by his forelock. The ethical and pragmatic applications of

time and prudence, concepts personified in this fresco and later art, were concomitantly discussed in literary works, such as Pontano's *De prudentia* (1508) and Machiavelli's *Il principe* (1515).

The final stage of my study focuses on the artistic propaganda of Cosimo I de' Medici. Traditional themes of cyclic return and dynastic renewal were newly formulated in *all'antica* historical contexts, and personifications of time were conceived in heroic proportions in the monumental art of Salviati and Vasari. Their allegories variously implied that Cosimo's power and glory as a prudent and exemplary ruler was a function of his forceful control of time and ability to grasp the propitious moment. Five different large-scale personifications, representing aspects of time and temporality, provide the leitmotif of the entire program in the *Sala dell'Udienza*. Salviati's personifications there were either free versions of antique visual sources, as in the case of the *Kairos* and *Phanes* reliefs, or were original designs that integrated *all'antica* elements, as in the case of *Prudenza* seizing the forelock of *Occasio*. The eclectic figure of *Chronos*, with his powerful, nude physiognomy and large wings, was related both to contemporary printer's *imprese* and depictions of Time/Saturn in printed editions of the *Trionfi*, further augmented by motifs from *Nemesis* and *Temperanza*. In this cumulative mannerist image Salviati molded the multiple facets of time into one hybrid creature. Hybridity would characterize later figures of monstrous Time.

Bronzino, in his *London Allegory* and design for the tapestry of *Justice Liberating Innocence*, adopted the *Veritas filia temporis* theme for Medici propaganda. His *Allegory of Happiness*, consonant with the traditional propagandist themes of Medici emblems and *imprese*, conveys the conception of *Felicitas Publica*. The Medici ruler would assure his Florentine subjects wealth, good fortune, peace and felicity, unaffected by the course of the stars and the movements of time.

A similar approach is illustrated in Vasari's *Allegory of Justice* executed for Cardinal Alessandro Farnese's *Palazzo della Cancelleria* in Rome, where the image of *Truth*, presented by *Time*, overcomes *Falsehood* and *Slander*. On the ceiling of the *Chamber of Fortune* at his home in Arezzo, Vasari depicted the *Allegory of Fortune, Envy and Virtue*, where the major protagonist is *Fortuna-Occasio* grasped by her forelock. In his later work for the Medici in the *Palazzo Vecchio*, Vasari furthered a mythographic-antiquarian tradition, but his last personification of Time was introduced, after the Council of Trent, into the scene of *The Last Judgment* on the interior of the dome in *Santa Maria del Fiore*. The personification of Time had become significant enough to invade the sphere of sacred art.

The story of Time's image in the visual arts does not end in the sixteenth century. In the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries came the scientific revolution, founded upon the achievements of Nicholas Copernicus, Galileo Galilei and Isaac Newton, with ensuing debates on relative versus absolute time.<sup>1</sup> Although it was recognized that clocks and instruments of scientific observation were not precise instruments, mechanistic advances in chronometer technology affected the concept of objective time.<sup>2</sup> Literary works by Shakespeare, Montaigne, Donne, Spenser, Milton and Marvel mirrored the sense of human frailty, but also promoted the awareness that man has to come to terms with time, to deal with its moral dimensions and paradoxes.<sup>3</sup> Renaissance illustrations to Petrarch's *Trionfo del Tempo* provided models and inspiration for allegorical prints, painting and sculpture, sepulchral monuments, emblems, portraits and for the living image of *Time* on the stage.<sup>4</sup> Illusionistic still-life allegories in *studioli* inspired the genre of *vanitas* painting. Artistic renditions of the *veritas filia temporis* theme maintained a dynamic function in the contexts of religious and political polemics, moral propaganda, debates regarding epistemology

<sup>1</sup> On philosophical aspects, see J.J.A. Mooij, *Time and the Mind, The History of a Philosophical Problem*, Leiden, 2005, 126–29, 130–46.

<sup>2</sup> See *Time; The Greatest Innovator, Timekeeping and Time Consciousness in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Rachel Doggett with assistance of Susan Jaskot & Robert Rand, exh. cat., The Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington D.C., 1986.

<sup>3</sup> See John Spencer Hill, *Infinity, Faith, and Time, Christian Humanism and Renaissance Literature*, Montreal, Buffalo, 1997, esp. 98–112. William Cunningham, in *The Cosmological Glasse*, London, 1559, p. 6, wrote: "The Miracle of God's creations lies in the intersection of the timeless with terrestrial time, and the human predicament is to be aware of this paradoxical dualism and to have the means to investigate its implications."; quoted from Anthony Parr, "Time and the Satyr," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 68, no. 3, 2005, 434. On the meaning and function of *kairos* in Milton, see Laurie Zwicky, "*Kairos* in *Paradise Regained*: The Divine Plan," *English Literary History*, vol. 31, No. 3, Sep., 1964, 271–77; regarding Father Time on the Shakespearean stage: Frederick Kiefer, "The Iconography of Time in the Winter's Tale," *Renaissance and Reformation*, vol. XXIII, 3, 1999, 49–64.

<sup>4</sup> For allegorical prints, see e.g. Samuel C. Chew, *The Pilgrimage of Life*, Port Washington, New York & London, 1973, figs. 25–50 & 146. and Susan Donahue Kuretsky, with contributions by Walter S. Gibson et al., *Time and Transformation in Seventeenth century Dutch Art*, Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Pouhkeepsie, New York, 2005. For examples of *Chronos* on sepulchral monuments, see the terracotta project for the funerary monument of Lamoral II Claude François comte de Tour et Taxis by Mattheus Van Beveren (c. 1630–90), Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Bruxelles (inspired by an engraving of Nicolaas van der Horst, pupil of Rubens, from 1645) and the Tomb of Giulio del Corno (d. 1662) by Ercole Ferrata, Church of Gesù and Maria, illustrated in Philippe Aries, *Images of Man and Death*, trans. J. Loyd, Cambridge, MA & London, 1985, fig. 272; On *vanitas* iconography: I. Bergström, *Dutch Still-Life Painting in the Seventeenth Century*, New York, 1956, esp. 154ff.; Regarding clocks in portraits: Roberto Panicali, *Orologi e Orologiai del Rinascimento Italiano, La Scuola Urbinate*, Urbino, 1988.

and science, and courtly eulogy. Peter Paul Rubens, Domenico Zampieri, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Nicolas Poussin, Sebastiano Ricci, Giovanni Battista Pittoni, François Le Moine, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo and Sir Joshua Reynolds were among the great European masters who perpetuated this iconography in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>5</sup>

While some Cinquecento theorists had celebrated the permanence of a great masterpiece with the slogan *Natura potentior Ars* (Art More Powerful than Nature), prints and paintings would perpetuate the image of art works consumed by Time. The most charming artistic commentary on a painting's vulnerability was William Hogarth's *Time Smoking a Picture* of 1761 (Fig. 140), where *Chronos*, the notorious destroyer, seated upon an ancient statue he has shattered, prepares to darken a painting with varnish as he carelessly pierces the canvas with his scythe. The parody challenging contemporary taste for old, darkened paintings bears an English inscription: "To Nature and Your Self appeal, Nor learn of others what to feel", which is complemented by the Greek inscription: "Time [*Chronos*] is not a great artist but weakens all he touches".

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<sup>5</sup> See: <http://riowang.blogspot.co.il/2010/09/veritas-filia-dei-3-time-and-truth.html> and "The Depiction of Time," in Kristen Lippincott, Umberto Eco & Ernst H. Gombrich, *The Story of Time*, Royal Observatory Greenwich, London, 2003, 171–82, and "Art and Time, *op. cit.*, 206–11.

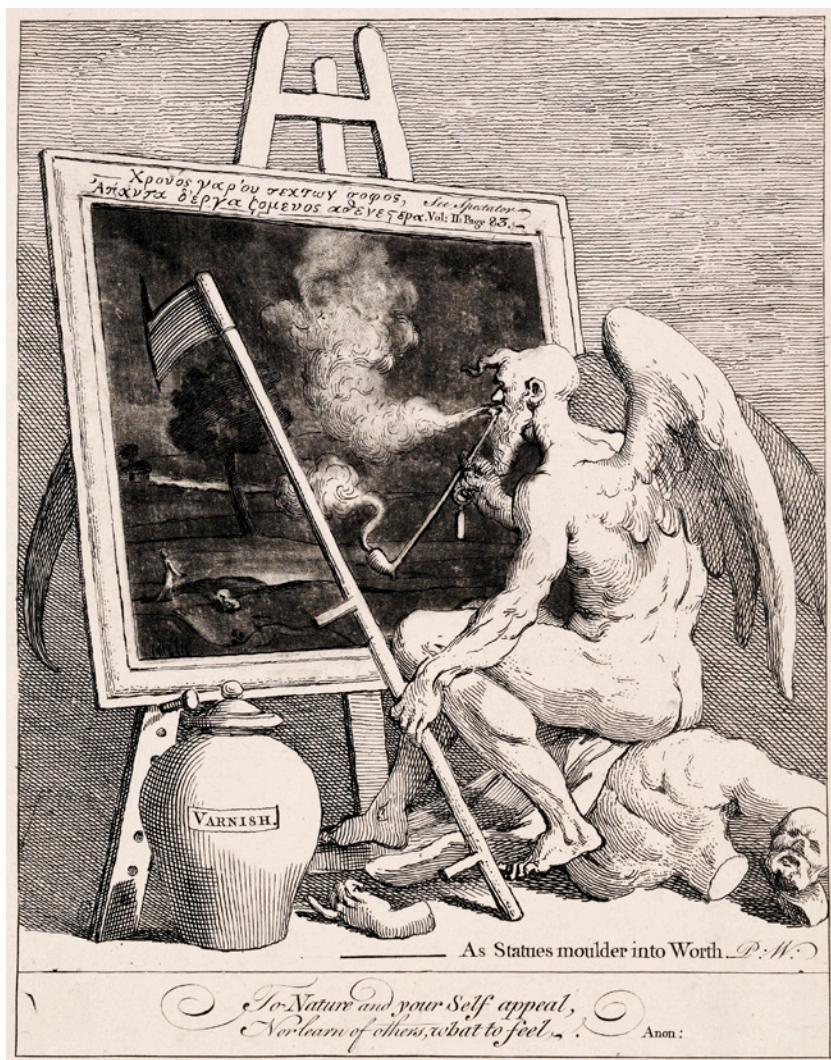


Fig. 140. William Hogarth, *Time Smoking a Picture*, etching and mezzotint, 1761, London, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings (S.2-156). © The Trustees of the British Museum.



## APPENDIX I

### CATALOGUE OF ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS OF PETRARCH'S *TRIONFI* LOCATED IN EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN COLLECTIONS

The following Petrarch manuscripts contain illuminations of at least one or all of the six *Trionfi*. Illuminated manuscripts of the *Trionfi* containing only decorative initials, margins and title-page illuminations of other themes (such as the *Rime*, *Canzone* or *Sonetti*) are not included. Other works by Petrarch, included in some of these manuscripts, are generally not referred to. Manuscripts are listed according to the country of their locations.

#### *Austria*

- 1 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, *Vind.* 2649, 1459, North Italian. Fig. 48.

The codex includes miniatures of the six *Trionfi* (fols. 4, 19r, 25r, 37r, 46r, 39r) and one frontispiece. It is attributed to the scribe and illuminator *Jacobus Veronensis* (Giacomo da Verona), who probably executed the codex for Borso d'Este at Pesaro.

Broad margins of white vine scrolls, populated by birds, animals and *putti*, frame the *Trionfi*. The *Trionfo del Tempo* is represented by a elderly man holding an hourglass and a minute figure of Apollo on his chariot tracing his heavenly orbit.

- 2 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MSS. 2581 & 2582, early 16th c., Parisian.

French translation. Eighty-six miniatures in vol. I and sixty-five in vol. II include illuminations of the six *Triumphes* as well as scenes of persons and episodes referred to in the text. The miniatures are attributed to the same Parisian workshop as Paris MSS. 12424, 5065 and 223, all closely related to the first French edition of the *Triumphes* (Verard, Paris, 1514).

*France*

**3 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ital. 545 (2373), 1456 Florentine.** Fig. 47.

This codex contains full-page illuminations of all six *Trionfi* (fols. 11v, 25v, 30v, 40r, 48r, 51r). Two other illuminated pages have finely painted margins with animals, *putti*, busts, scenes, portraits of Petrarch and a coat of arms (fols. 12r, 54r). It is attributed to the major Florentine miniaturist Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico (d. 1485) and is dated on fol. 243v. (cf. *infra* nos. 4 and 31).

**4 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ital. 548 (7762), 1476, Florentine.** Fig. 52.

Seven full-page illuminations include an *Allegory of Laura* (a shipwrecked man clinging to a laurel tree, fol. 1v.) and six *Trionfi* (fols. 10v, 24v, 29v, 39v, 47v, 51v).

This elegant manuscript was illuminated by the Florentine Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico and was written by the Florentine scribe Antonio Sinibaldi (act. 1468–85), who signed and dated it (199v). The patron was probably Lorenzo de' Medici, whose emblem, the diamond ring, appears as a frame for a man leaning on the laurel tree (fol. 1). On the same page the Medici *broncone* appears in four corner roundels of the floral margins. The codex was presented to Charles VIII in 1494.

**5 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ital. 549 (7770), ca. 1440, Venetian or Lombard.**

Three historiated initials depict the *Trionfo dell'Amore* (fol. 157), *Death of Laura* and *The Poet in his Study* combined (115v) and a portrait of Petrarch (9r). The *Trionfo* depicts Venetian-Gothic architecture and a mountainous Veneto landscape. This compares with other miniatures attributed to the Venetian miniaturist Cristoforo Cortese (Cohen, 1985) (cf. Paris, Bibl. Nat. Ital. 78 & Oxford, Bodl. Canon. Misc. 251).

**6 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Franç. 223 (6875), late 15th or early 16th c., Parisian.** Fig. 68.

French translation. The first *Triomphe* is missing. There are full-page illuminations of the other five *Triumphes* (fols. 94v, 123v, 160v, 301v, 321r) depicted in great narrative detail framed by decorative columns. This codex is related to the others produced by the Parisian workshop (*supra* no. 2).

**7 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, *Franç.* 594 (7078), ca. 1503, Rouen School.**

French translation. Two full-page illuminations of each *Triomphe* appear opposite each other in diptych form (fols. 7v–8r, 101v–102r, 134v–135r, 178v–179r, 348v–349r). The illuminated pages at the beginning contain the coat of arms of Louis XII (d. 1515), flanked by porcupines (his device) and surrounded by other emblems of the French crown (2v). A full-page illumination shows Petrarch asleep as he imagines the *Trionfo dell'Amore*, and includes a brief introductory text (3r). This is one of the most magnificent products of the Rouen school. Traditional *Trionfi* scenes are embellished with landscapes, pseudo classical architecture and elegant cortège figures in fine detail, all executed in brilliant colors with gold. Two different painters have been cited, one called the *Maestro dei Trionfi del Petrarca*, the other a collaborator of Jean Pichore.

**8 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, *Franç.* 24461, early 16th c.**

French translation. The codex on vellum contains over a hundred large pen sketches of very fine quality, some of them colored. These include the six *Triomphe*s (fols. 2v, 3r, 4r, 5r, 6r, 7r), which are related to Arsenal MS. 5066 (infra no. 14) and are interspersed with the same Latin and French inscriptions. *Le Temps* is represented as a bourgeois Frenchman, with an astrolabe and purse on his belt, holding a cane and hourglass. He tramples the fallen figure of winged *Renommée* with her broken mirror and book. Many allegorical images of mythological, moral and philosophical themes are accompanied by titles and brief texts. The collection was made by François Robertet, shortly after 1509 (arms on 115r). François I is depicted in a medal (138v). The codex also contains Bourbon arms and devices (140v) and a portrait of Charles de Bourbon who died in 1527 (141r).

**9 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, *Franç.* 12423 (5347), early 16th c., Parisian.**

French translation. This codex contains full-page illuminations of the six *Trionfi* (fols. 1v, 29v, 37v, 51v, 72v, 79v), which were copied from the woodcuts of the 1492/3 edition of the *Trionfi* printed by Codeca and reprinted by Zani in 1497 and 1500 (all in Venice). It is probably contemporaneous with the three Parisian manuscripts mentioned (supra no. 2). The iconography of Petrarch dreaming in a garden was taken over in the first French printing of Verard (1514).

**10 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, *Franç.* 22541 (La Vallière 6), second quarter of the 16th c.**

French and Italian text. Full-page illuminations of the six *Trionfi* are framed by architectural motifs, insignia and mottos (fols. 1r, 58v, 77v, 101v, 188r, 201r). The mottos and device are those of Anne Malet, daughter of the Amiral de Granville and wife of Pierre de Balzac (b. 1479), whose coat of arms appears on fol. 77v. Anne Malet modernized an Italian work of Boccaccio. The couple was probably married in the 1520s, to which we can postdate the manuscript. The miniatures represent an early, eclectic stage of French Renaissance style. Most of the *Trionfi* depictions are related to the Italian versions with the addition of broad landscapes. An exception is the Triumph of Time, who rides a celestial chariot led by four horses of varied colors above a romantic marine landscape where Laura and a horse lie dead (188r). The horses of the sun chariot, as symbols of the four seasons and the four times of day, was popular in French illuminations, following the medieval tradition of *quadripartitus temporum* that goes back to Fulgentius (*Mythologiae*, I, xi). The landscapes in this codex appear to be the work of a second artist.

**11 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, *Franç.* 12424 (2036.56), late 15th or early 16th c., Parisian.**

French translation. The last three *Trionfi* and numerous other themes are illuminated in full-page. This is probably the second half of *Arsenal* 5065 (infra no. 12), which contains only the first three *Trionfi*. The illuminations appear to have been executed by the same Parisian workshop mentioned above (supra no. 2). Here (fol. 137v), as in the related manuscripts, Time is depicted as a royal figure seated on a chariot and accompanied by personifications of the Four Seasons. The introduction of episodes from the lives of historical personages cited by Petrarch may be attributed to the French translation of Bernardo Illicino's lengthy commentary on the *Trionfi* (written shortly after 1463; first published in Bologna, 1473).

**12 Paris, Bibliothèque de L'Arsenal, MS. 5065, ca. 1498–1515.**

French translation. This codex contains numerous full-page illuminations of episodes involving persons mentioned by Petrarch, but only the first three *Trionfi* are illustrated (see supra no. 11).

**13 Paris, Bibliothèque de L'Arsenal, MS. 6840, 16th c. (after 1520).**

French translation. Several illuminations illustrate each of the *Triomphe*s (fols. 1v–2r, 22v, 31v, 44v, 56v–57r, 63v, 67v, 108v–109r, 118r–119r).

Other illuminations were removed before the book was bound, including most of those illustrating Fame (bet. Fols. 10–11, 77–78). The illustrator signed “Godefroy” has been identified as Godefroy de Batave, known for his illustrations of the commentaries by A. Pigge on Caesar’s Gallic War (Paris, Chantilly and London), made for François I in 1519/20, but there have also been other attributions. The miniaturist, influenced by Flemish painters and the School of Fontainebleau, transformed the traditional scenes into courtly dramas. The *Triumph of Time* combines the celestial *quadriga*, a zodiacal arch, the fall of Fame and her chariot, and personified seasons (108v–109r). Despite the small dimensions of the book, the illuminations contain myriad details and project spatial dimension and grandeur usually found in larger works.

**14 Paris, Bibliothèque de L’Arsenal, MS. 5066, late 15th or early 16th c.**

French translation. This codex contains many pen drawings, including allegorical depictions of the six *Triumphes*, Olympic deities, and muses, which depart in style and iconography from the illustrations in other French manuscripts. No chariots are depicted; each personification is shown as a victor trampling his enemy. The allegorical figures are combined with inscriptions and texts in Gothic script, suggesting a model other than manuscript illumination—perhaps tarot cards or local prints. The codex contains the oldest version of the French commentaries found on 16th c. tapestries located in the Victoria and Albert Museum and Hampton Court. However, the suggestion that these drawings were intended as cartoons for tapestries is unfounded, as all the tapestries depict chariot processions.

**15 Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André, MS. 17, 15th c.**

Italian codex. Small illuminations precede the *Trionfi* on fols. 3r, 19r, 24r, 42r, 47r.

*Germany*

**16 Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, M. 78 D 11, between 1450–1480, (ex. Hamilton Collection, Berlin-Wiesbaden, 501), Neapolitan. Fig. 51.**

Illustrations of the six *Trionfi* on the opening pages of the chapters are accompanied by text from Francesco Filelfo’s commentary (written in Milan ca. 1445 for Filippo Maria Visconti) and framed by wide, beautifully



ornamented margins populated mainly by *putti*. Title-pages have historiated initials, ornamented margins and a coat of arms. A small sketch on fol. 170r depicts Scipio Africanus. The margins are related to the work of Cola Rapicano, who worked in Naples between 1451 and 1488 (cf. Ottob.lat. 2998, *infra* no. 43). Franco-Flemish influence, common in Neapolitan miniature art of this period, is evident in the last two *Trionfi*. The others are extremely naïve but charming in their original iconography and are by another hand. This is probably one of the earliest manuscripts containing the commentary by Fililefo (it probably dates from his lifetime), which seems to have inspired iconographic innovations, such as Scipio and Astrea in the second *Trionfo*, the parcae and dragons in the third, lions in the fourth, the wheel of Fortune, a phoenix and elements in the fifth, and reference to the *Last Judgment* in the final *Trionfo*.

**17 Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen (ex. Koeniglichen Bibliothek, 153), 1460, North Italian**

The codex contains illuminations of all six *Trionfi*. It was written in Pesaro on April 29th 1460 for Borso d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, whose coat of arms appears below the first *Trionfo*. Both this codex and the one at Vienna (*supra* no. 1) were written by the scribe Giacomo (or Jacopo) da Verona, who may also have executed the illuminations although differences exist in the iconography of the two codices.

**18 Frankfurt (formerly Goldschmidt Coll., present location unknown), 16th c.**

This French codex, according to D'Essling & Müntz (1902, 240–41, 269), belonged to the period of François I and contains miniatures of crude style but interesting iconography (only the first two are described).

**19 Kassel, Landes-und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel, 40 MS. poet. et roman 6, 1483, Parma.**

This Italian codex contains sixteen extraordinary illuminations depicting Petrarch, his *Rime* and the six *Trionfi* (fols. 149v, 166r, 166v, 176r, 183v, 157r). The text was written by Giacomo Giglio (Jacobus Lilius) of Bologna, probably for himself, as it bears his coat of arms (149v). The illuminations were attributed to Marmitta on the basis of notes regarding a miniaturist of this name that were copied from Vasari (*Vite*, ed. Milanese, V, 1880, 383) on the inner cover of the codex. It has variously been suggested that

he may be Giovanni Marco Cinico (act. 1467–92), court painter to King Ferdinand I, who worked in Parma as painter, engraver and illuminator, or Francesco Marmitta of Parma (1457–1505), to whom two other illuminated manuscripts have been attributed (the Turin missal, Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore and the “Durazzo Hours”, Bibl. Civica Beria, Genova). The iconography of the *Trionfi* is exceptional, combining Mantegnesque classical type figures with mythological creatures, grotesque animals and poetic landscapes. Other Petrarch texts included in the codex are *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and the *Testamentum*. Fol. 1 presents an elaborate frontispiece with a mannerist architectural structure, an ornately framed medallion of Petrarch and Laura, and the coat of arms (after 1534) of the house of Este, Dukes of Este and Ferrara. This page was obviously added by a member of this family who purchased the codex in the 16th century.

**20 Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod.Gall. 14 (ex Mannheim), 15th c.**

French translation. The codex contains a full-page illumination of the *Triumph of Love* (1v) and a pen drawing of the *Adoration of the Magi* (42r). The *Triumph of Love* seems to be a direct interpretation of the text by a French miniaturist who was unfamiliar with Italian illustrations of the *Trionfi*. Cupid and Venus are seated on a cart led by four horses, while the victims of Cupid's arrows stand conversing in the foreground and the poet sits with a book on his knees. This is probably the oldest known illuminated copy of the *Trionfi* produced in France.

**21 Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod.Ital. 81, after 1414, North Italian.**

A single *Trionfo* illustration (146r) appears with the text of the *Trionfo della Morte* but depicts an unusual interpretation of this theme. An angel and six figures are seated in a cart led by two dark horses. Another illumination depicts Petrarch and others mourning the death of Laura in a Gothic loggia (105r). These are the earliest known illuminations of Petrarch's *Trionfi* and have been attributed to Stefano da Verona (1375–ca. 1438), who was trained in Lombardy, or to a miniaturist of the Bolognese school. The similarities between this miniature and those of the incunabulum of 1478 in the *Biblioteca Nazionale*, Florence (B.R. 103), by a Paduan miniaturist, have not been previously noted. It appears that the Paduan illustrator of the printed edition was influenced by this earlier illustration. The codex also includes the *Canzoniere* and *Epistolae* of Petrarch.

*Netherlands***22 Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, BPL 2887, ca. 1420–30, Lombard (?)**

An illumination of the *Trionfo dell'Amore* and the opening text is framed by decorative margins containing floral motifs and busts in roundels. It was executed by the same unidentified Lombard miniaturist who illuminated a copy of Petrarch's *Canzoniere* (Bodleian, *Canon. Ital.* 69), which was dated ca. 1420–30. The miniature is partly damaged but traces remain of cupids, a chariot emerging from a medieval gate (an alternative to the triumphal arch on north Italian *cassoni*) and a decorative landscape with animals. This miniature is a rare example of the early Lombard development of this theme.

*Italy***23 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Strozzi 174, ca. 1450, Florentine. Fig. 40.**

Numerous illuminations in this codex include the six *Trionfi* (fols. 19, 28, 32, 35, 44, 47). Although the codex contains only the text of the *Trionfi*, full-page illustrations on the first eight pages depict the *uomini illustri*. It was written in calligraphic *mercantesca* script with humanistic features by the Florentine scribe Bese Ardinghelli (signed on fol. 49v) (and was incorrectly dated 1327). Ardinghelli also signed and dated an illuminated manuscript of the *Divina Commedia* and the *Trionfi* in 1442 (Pal. 72, *infra* no. 24). Most scholars have attributed the illuminations to a Florentine workshop due to their relationship with other Florentine illustrations of the *Trionfi* in manuscripts and on *cassoni* (cf. *Ricc.* 1129, *Ricc.* 1147 and *Pal.* 72, *infra* nos. 30, 31 & 24).

**24 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Pal. 72, Dante, *La Divina Commedia* & Petrarca, *Trionfi*, 1442, Florentine. Fig. 38.**

The six *Trionfi* are illuminated (fols. 75v, 78v, 80v, 84v, 86v, 87v). The codex was written by the scribe Bese Ardinghelli (signed and dated on fols. 75r & 88). The patron was Guido di Francesco Baldovinetti of the influential Florentine family. The beautiful miniatures, revealing fine draftsmanship and delicate chiaroscuro, are also Florentine and have been attributed to Apollonio di Giovanni (cf. *supra* no. 23). Undeniable iconographic similarities establish a relationship between the three Florentine

manuscripts, which I ascribe to three different hands based on their style. It is possible that *Pal.* 72, which is the simplest version of the three, was the earliest, followed soon after by *Urb.lat.* 683 (*infra* no. 41).

**25 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Amiat. 5, mid, 15th c., Florentine.**

The *Trionfo dell'Amore* is depicted at the beginning of the codex with decorative margins and a portrait of Petrarch in the initial (fols. 1v & 2r). An initial at the beginning of each chapter contains a symbolic image related to the text (e.g. the hourglass of Time on fol. 47). The style is related to that of Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico but is of inferior quality.

**26 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ashb. 845 (776), 1457, Florentine.**

An initial at the beginning of each *Trionfo* contains a small allegorical scene or figure relating to the text (fols. 152, 164, 168, 177, 185, 187). The profile portrait of Father Time holding an hourglass is depicted in an initial on fol. 185. Marginal decoration on these and other pages (a total of nine illuminated pages) are of the white vine variety with animals and *putti*. Two pages contain the same (damaged) coat of arms, that of the Albizzi (fols. 10 & 11). The small miniatures are related in style and iconography to those of Parma 280 (*infra* no. 34), which was probably executed in Florence at the same time.

**27 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, Pal. 192, mid. 15th c., Florentine.**

The six *Trionfi* are illuminated on pages of texts with margins and initials of interlacing white vine scrolls inhabited by various birds in fine detail (fols. 1, 17, 22, 34, 43, 47). Similar marginal decoration and an almost obliterated coat of arms are depicted on the opening page of the *Rime* (51). Stylish figures, remnants of the Gothic International style, are crowded into most scenes and resemble those on the early *cassoni* dating roughly to the 1440s. Classical ornaments, such as *putti*, which are common in margins of *Trionfi* illuminations after 1450, are lacking. The narrative style and iconography link the *Trionfi* illustrations to Florentine *cassoni*, while the marginal decoration is typical of Florentine manuscript illumination (*cf.* Parma 280, *infra* no. 34).

**28 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, Pal. 197, 1453 or later, Florentine.**

A full-page illumination of the *Trionfo dell'Amore* appears on the frontispiece. Other Pages have illuminated initials and marginal decorations, with *putti*, birds and garlands (fols. 15, 19, 22, 38, 40). The Florentine patron was Rainaldo della Luna (Renaldus de Luna) (fol. 1), whose family arms

are depicted (fol. 40). The date appears to be 1453, at which time Rainaldo was only 19 years old. This is a most beautiful manuscript in perfect condition. The frontispiece miniature is on a gold leaf background with a diaper pattern. Pal. 197 appears to have been the model for the Florentine engravings (ca. 1470–90) (Fig. 59).

**29 Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, cod. 1108, 3rd quarter of the 15th c., Florentine.**

*Petrarca & Dante, Rime e Vite di Leonardo Aretino.*

The *Trionfi* are not depicted as processions. At the beginning of each chapter there is a small allegorical scene in an initial or decorative frieze (fols. 4, 7, 14, 18, 21, 24, 27, 29, 32, 34, 37). Some initials contain portraits of Petrarch. The illuminations have variously been attributed to Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico (act. 1455–85) and Filippo di Matteo Torelli (act. ca. 1440–68).

**30 Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, cod. 1129, mid 15th c., Florentine. Fig. 39.**

This Florentine codex contains full-page illuminations of the six *Trionfi*. The arms of the Della Stufa family appear on fol. 2. The miniatures have been variously attributed to Benozzo Gozzoli, Apollonio di Giovanni, Matteo di Pasti, and the “master of the Riccardian Virgil”. It has also been attributed to the same workshop that produced *Strozzi* 174 (see supra no. 24). The miniatures have several iconographic distinctions that place it around the mid *Quattrocento*. The version of *Fama*, derived from *Gloria* of Boccaccio's *Amorosa Visione* also appears on several *cassoni* and all manuscripts dating to about 1440–1445, after which it undergoes modifications.

**31 Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, cod. 1147, second half of 15th c., Florentine.**

Five *Trionfi* illuminations in monochrome chiaroscuro wash and (unfinished) line sketches (fols. 1, 16, 31, 40, 43) remain. The beginning of the codex is partly damaged and the *Trionfo dell'Amore* is missing. The sketches were copied from *Strozzi* 174 and appear to be the work of a Florentine painter. They exhibit a stylistic spontaneity and confidence in execution even though the iconography is traditional.



**32 Milano, Biblioteca Trivulziana, cod. 905, before 1485, Florentine.**

Full page illuminations depict the six *Trionfi* (fols. 152v, 166v, 171v, 181v, 191v, 195v) and *Petrarch in his Study* (facing the title-page). All the latter have decorative margins with floral motifs. The miniatures have generally been attributed to Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico (d. 1485). High Renaissance architecture (171v), sculptural elements (152v) and refinements of landscape painting (e.g. aerial perspective) support the attribution of the miniatures to the late period of Francesco's career. The later period is also characterized by a profusion of new motifs, attributes and ornaments superimposed on the traditional chariot processions. The *Trionfo del Tempo* follows the traditional Florentine model (191v).

**33 Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Ital. 103, second half of the 15th c., Illuminated in Tours (?).**

Full-page illuminations precede the opening pages of the six *Trionfi* (fols. 2v, 22v, 23v, 44v, 57v, 62v). The opening pages of text are framed by marginal decorations on all four sides with figures, animals, birds and foliage. Among the marginal animals are frolicking monkeys that recall Gothic margins and are still found in late *Quattrocento* Flemish and French manuscripts. Each of these pages also has a decorative initial. Although the text is Italian, the miniatures have a typically French style, especially salient in the ornamental margins and initials. There is a similarity between the iconography of the *Trionfi* illustrations and those of the Florentine engravings of the 1460s (Fig. 58), from which they were probably copied. This would explain the French artist's use of Italian iconography. The miniaturist replaced the Renaissance architecture of the prints with Gothic structures, and his form and style are more archaic. The style of the margins is found in illuminations produced in Tours, which occupied a leading role in the production of illuminated manuscripts from the mid fifteenth century.

**34 Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, Pal. 280, ca. 1460, Florentine.**

Minute allegorical figures relating to the six *Trionfi* are framed by vine-scroll ornament in margins and initials (fols. 1r, 16v, 20v, 28v, 40v, 44v). The white vine-scrolls and painterly style of the very fine miniatures are related to Florentine work of the late 1450s or early 1460s. Iconographic details are comparable to Ashb. 845, dated 1457, Ital 545, dated 1456, and Yale MS. 438 (infra nos. 26, 3 & 61), which are all Florentine.

**35 Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, Parm. 1648, late 15th c., Florentine.**

The *Trionfo dell'Amore* is depicted in a small but detailed illumination above a half page of text (fol. 139r). The same page contains a portrait of Petrarch in the initial and a decorative pedestal on the lower right hand corner, from which an *amorino* shoots arrows. Ornamental margins contain flowers, birds, animals and *putti*. (The first page of the *Rime* has a similar initial and margins, with a coat of arms (1r). The iconography of the *Trionfo dell'Amore* follows the traditional version of this theme on Florentine *deschi da parto*, engravings and manuscripts of the late *Quattrocento*.

**36 Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, 2663, mid 15th c., Parma.**

A full-page illumination depicts the *Trionfo dell'Amore*. The first page of each additional chapter has white vine-scroll margins incorporating an interlaced initial and a rectangular shaped illustration of the *Trionfo* at the bottom. The title-page of the *Trionfi* has similar margins, an allegory of Hercules and *Amor* and a coat of arms (fol. 13). The type of dense and fleshy vine-scroll margins in this codex are found in north Italian and Roman miniatures. The illustrations are closely related to those of Parma 307 (infra no. 37), which can be attributed to the same period and workshop. The drawings of Canon.Ital. 83 (infra no. 58) appear to be direct copies from this codex.

**37 Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, 307, mid 15th c., North Italian.**

The beginning of the codex, including the first three *Trionfi* illustrations, is missing. Illustrations of the last four *Trionfi* (fols. 2v, 11v, 16v, 19v) exhibit iconography that is similar to Parma 2663. The *Trionfo del Tempo* shows Father Time in profile, on crutches with a lateral view of the chariot led by two stags (16v). The illumination is probably north Italian (see supra no. 36).

**38 Rome, Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Lincei e Corsiniana, 55.K.10, (Cors. 1081), third quarter of the 15th c., Florentine.**

The codex contains full-page illuminations of all six *Trionfi* (fols. 1, 17, 23, 36, 46, 51) in frames with floral margins. Fol. 2 has a frieze of Chastity, a unicorn and two youths. Marginal decoration consists mainly of stylized flowers, occasional birds and some symbolic vignettes. The illumination is related to that of MSS. 545 and 548 (respectively dated 1456 & 1478), both attributed to the Florentine workshop of Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico (supra nos. 3 & 4). The scene of the *Trionfo del Tempo* is

typically Florentine; Time is perched on an armillary sphere and holds an hourglass. As the style is archaic, the work is probably not later than 1460 or 1470.

**39 Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Chigi L. IV 114 (2331), second half of the 15th c., Florentine.**

All six *Trioni* are illustrated. Apollo and Daphne and a coat of arms are depicted at the beginning of the *Rime* (fol. 10). The arms belong to the Florentine Pietro di Pazzino Lucalberto. The scribe was identified as Leonardo d'Arezzo and the miniatures were attributed to Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico. Both style and iconography are closely related to Canon. Ital. 62 (infra no. 57) and to other miniatures connected to the school of Francesco d'Antonio, dating roughly to the 1460s and 70s.

**40 Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb.lat. 681, between 1440–1460 (?), Florentine.**

An illumination of each *Trionfo* appears at the beginning of each chapter above the text (fols. 151, 163, 167, 177, 184, 187). These are framed by ornamental margins, with stylized floral motifs, birds and *putti*. Another page pictures Daphne and Apollo above and a coat of arms of Urbino below. The Florentine scribe Antonio Sinibaldi (act. ca.1468–85), who signed his name at the end of this codex, also wrote the text of the Petrarch manuscripts in the Biblioteca Marciana (Ital.cl.n. 431, dated 1468) and the Bibliothèque Nationale (Ital. 548, dated 1476) and worked with Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico on the *Lorenzo Book of Hours* (Laurenziana, cod. 1874, dated 1485). The illuminations were probably done in the workshop of Francesco d'Antonio, although the marginal decoration is more refined and precise than that of Francesco himself.

**41 Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb.lat. 683, between 1468 and 1485, Florentine. Fig. 41.**

The codex contains illuminations of all six *Trionfi* (fols. 11r, 19v, 23r, 26r, 33r, 35v, 32v). The iconography is related to that of Pal. 72 (dated 1442) (supra no. 24) and other Florentine illuminations of the same group but is comparatively crude in style and was copied by a mediocre artist.

**42 Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb.lat. 3943, third quarter of the 15th c., Lombard. Fig. 45.**

This codex, which contains several texts—Antonio da Tempo, *Vita del Petrarca*; F. Petrarca, *La nota su Laura*; il *Canzoniere e Trionfi*, as well as

other writings, has numerous illuminations, including those of the six *Trionfi* (fols. 157r, 166v, 170v, 177r, 191r, 194r). There are additional allegorical miniatures preceding and following the *Trionfi* (17r, 1145v, 197r, 243r). On fol. 17 a beautiful page shows Laura crowning Petrarch with a coat of arms and the initials GS in the frieze below. The manuscript is exceptional due to its brilliant areas of solid colors with gold highlights and decorative style that identify it as a Lombard work. The arms and initials of Giovanni Sforza, Lord of Pesaro (1466–1510) must be a later addition to the manuscript. It is likely that the miniatures were executed in the 1460s, at the time Trivulziana cod. 1329 was illuminated for Galeazzo Maria Sforza (1444–76) in the same style (cf. fol. 1 of cod. 1329 in Bologna, 1973, 39). Arms of the Malatestiani precede the *Rime* of Malatesta de' Malatesti (243r).

**43 Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ottob.lat. 2998, bet. 1451–58, Neapolitan.**

The last four *Trionfi* are illuminated in full-page with floral margins containing birds, animals, *putti* and portrait medallions (fols. 2r, 16r, 22r, 30r TF, 42r TT, 47r, 52r). A coat of arms appears on fol. 47r. The very fine marginal decoration is related to that of Berlin M. 78 D 11 (supra no. 16) and greatly resembles a psalter identified with the Neapolitan workshop of Cola Rapicano (act. 1451–88). The same type of work is also found in an Escorial manuscript of Virgil made for Alfonso V of Aragon, which belongs to the period between 1443 (establishment of his court at Naples) and his death in 1458. The iconography of Ottob.lat. 2998 is Italian, but the artist introduced some original imagery, such as the double horn motif and volcanic mountains supporting the figure of Fame in the *Trionfo della Fama*, which have no parallels in extant *Trionfi* illustrations and may be related to the commentary by Francesco Filelfo.

**44 Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, lat. 3157, mid 15th c., N.E. Italy (Ferrara or Venice?) Fig. 46.**

All six *Trionfi* all illustrated by half-page illuminations with decorative margins of floral motifs, birds and butterflies, on three sides (fols. 9v, 13r, 17r, 26r, 34r, 37r). Nine additional pages have decorative margins only (fols. 1r, 7r, 16r, 20r, 23r, 28r, 31r, 38r). The initial of each stanza is decorated by alternating male and female busts. The style of the marginal decoration is typical of 15th c. Ferrara but is also related to the work of Leonardo Bellini (act. 1443–90), nephew and apprentice of Jacopo Bellini (Venice), who was influenced by Ferrarese illumination. The iconography of the *Trionfo del*

*Tempo* (34r) is reminiscent of *Trecento* narratives, indicating that the artist was not in contact with contemporary mainstream illuminations.

**45 Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb.lat. 3962, second half of the 15th c., Ferrara (?).**

The first page of each chapter has white vine-scroll margins on three sides, a decorative initial and a small *Trionfo* illustration. The miniatures resemble Ferrarese work belonging to the second half of the *Quattrocento*. The iconography of the *Trionfo del Tempo* (fol. 346v), as the others of this group, follows the traditional lateral view of the chariot.

**46 San Daniele del Friuli, Biblioteca Civica Guareniana, 139 Mazz., late 15th c., Padua or Mantua (?).**

Small illuminations of the six *Trionfi* in frames decorate pages of text. The margins are lined with candelabras, shields, and vase motifs with occasional *putti*. A coat of arms is depicted in several illuminations. Time is depicted in a Roman chariot led by two stags; his only attribute is a large sickle. The type of motifs used in the marginal decoration, the introduction of Roman style triumphal chariots, classical festoons, and new mythological themes, all point to the later years of the *Quattrocento*. Certain iconographic features in this codex are found only in the illuminations of Padua and Mantua.

**47 Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, Ital. 431 (6206), 1468, Florentine.**

The *Trionfo dell'Amore* is depicted on the opening page of the *Trionfi* (fol. 149). Apollo and Daphne appear on the frontispiece and in a frieze (9). White scroll margins are populated by animals, birds, *putti* and minute vignettes. The codex was signed by Antonio Sinibaldi (147) and the miniatures are Florentine. The *Trionfo dell'Amore* is closely related to the same scene in the Florentine engraving of the six *Trionfi* (ca. 1460–70) (cat. No. 58).

*Russia*

**48 Leningrad, Public State Library M.E. Satykov-Scedrin, Fr.Fv.XV no. 4 (formerly in the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, Fr.5.3.63), ca. 1500, Parisian.**

The codex contains a total of twelve illuminations including those of the six *Trionfi*. Among the representations are battles, duals, maritime



combats, and an execution. The signature of Louis XII (d. 1515) is on fol. 3. The miniatures have been variously attributed to the same Parisian workshop as Vienna cod. 2581 & 2582 and Paris, Franç. 12424 (supra nos. 2 & 11) and to the School of Jean Bourdichon.

### *Spain*

#### **49 Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, vit. 22–1, ca. 1480, Florentine (?)**

The codex contains large illuminations of the first four *Trionfi* with ornamented margins (fols. 151r, 162r, 166v, 176r). A portrait of Petrarch (4v) is followed by another illuminated page containing margins with floral and fruit patterns, scrolls, *putti*, candelabras, devices and the motto *Non Mai* (10v). Illustrations of the Rime begin on fol. 11. This codex belonged to the library of Federigo III da Montefeltro (1444–82) in Urbino. The initials FD (Federigo Duca) appear on several pages, as do his devices and motto. The scribe's signature reads: *manu matthaei domini Hercolani de Volerris*. The illuminations are very sumptuous, both in design and color (predominantly blues, purples, lavenders and scarlet). The margins are varied and contain either architectural motifs or stylized floral patterns on a dark background.

The miniatures have been variously attributed to the Sienese Francesco di Giorgio (1439–1501/2), an artist of a north Italian school (Ferrara?), a Florentine and recently to Bartolomeo della Gatta (Villar, 1995). Della Gatta (Pietro Dei, 1448–1502) was a painter, illuminator, musician and architect of Florence.

#### **50 Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, vit. 22–3, 1508, Bolognese.**

This codex contains numerous full-page illuminations. The *Trionfi dell'Amore*, *Morte* and *Fama* each commence with a decorative monochrome title-page, in purples or greens, followed by the traditional *Trionfo* illustration and then by the opening text with ornamental margins and initials (fols. 142r, 142v, 143r, 161r, 161v, 162r, 169r, 170r). Other pages of the *Trionfi* have illuminated margins and initials, but the illustrations of *Castità*, *Tempo* and *Eternità* have been removed. Especially noteworthy is the frontispiece of *Le Cose Volgari* depicting Petrarch and Apollo flanking the laurel tree in a landscape (1v). An illuminated page facing the latter contains a coat of arms in the lower margin (2) and the same arms are repeated on fol. 142. The codex was copied by Lodovico de Vicende, who signed and dated it 1508. The style is so varied that at least two miniaturists must have participated. The *Trionfo dell'Amore* (142v) and *Trionfo della*

*Morte* (161v) although quite different seem to be by one hand; the *Trionfo della Fama* (169v) is by another. Some of the miniatures have architectural frames of the type found in the Veneto, others have stylized floral margins on dark grounds with all'antica cameo portraits. Striking combinations of cool colors (purples, blues, greens and grays) are characteristic. The illuminations have recently been attributed to Giovanni Battista Cavalletto, painter, sculptor, musician, poet and miniaturist of Bologna (act. 1486–1523), who may have executed the illustrations together with his son Scipione and/or other miniaturists in his workshop. His work combined the style of his local Bolognese school with Ferrarese, Venetian and Mantuan influences.

**51 Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, vit. 22–4, last quarter of the 15th c., Florentine.**

This tiny codex (12 × 8 cm.) has sumptuous illuminations of the six *Trionfi* with richly ornamented margins that contain vignettes, portraits, *putti*, animals, birds and hybrid creatures (fols. 12v, 34v, 41v, 57v, 70v, 76v). The same type of margins frame the texts on the opposite pages, creating a harmonious symmetrical effect. Additional images of the allegorical personifications are depicted in initials and vignettes. *Petrarch in his Study*, surrounded by the virtues in an architectural complex, is shown in the frontispiece (1v); following that he is crowned with laurel (13r). The traditional Florentine iconography has been enhanced by many imaginative motifs. The miniatures have tentatively been attributed to Filippo di Matteo Torelli (act.ca. 1440–68) or to Riccardo di Nanni, both Florentines. The codex also contains Leonardo Bruni's *Life of Petrarch*.

**52 Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS. 611 (M. 90), 3rd quarter of 15th c., Italian**

The codex contains illuminations of Laura, Petrarch and a figure playing a lute (fol. 1v), the Death of Laura (fol. 97r), and the *Trionfi* (fols. 139v, 152r, 155v, 164v, 171v, 174r). Gold and green are predominant colors.

*Britain*

**53 London, British Library, Harley 5761, second half of the 16th c., Florentine.**

This codex has a total of seven illuminated pages (fols. 11, 24, 29, 36, 47, 50, 55). Chariot processions of the *Trionfi* appear in oval or rectangular frames at the bottom of the pages. Decorative margins contain stylized

floral motifs, candelabras, birds, *putti* and busts or figures in medallions. Each page has a historiated initial related to the text. The Medici device (a diamond ring) frames the world map (50) and is figured in some of the margins. The miniatures, executed with the spontaneity of an experienced draftsman, are attributed to Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico, or to his contemporary Filippo di Matteo Torelli, whose work was similar.

**54 London, British Library, Add. 38125, late 15th c., North Italian.**

Only the first four *Trionfi* are illustrated (fols. 33v, 50r, 58r, 67v). These are full-page illuminations with simulated wooden frames. The miniaturist was a northern artist, probably Paduan, who was greatly influenced by Mantegna. He has imitated Mantegna's architectural backgrounds, landscapes, clinging draperies, figure stances and Roman soldiers. Despite the broad vistas, individual figures are treated two-dimensionally and the attempt to imitate Mantegna's spatial illusionism falls short of the original. The appearance of Petrarch and a companion, though based on the text of the *Trionfo dell'Amore*, is not found in miniatures prior to the last decade of the *Quattrocento* and first appeared in print in the 1488 Rizus edition. They are figured here in much the same way as those on JA 7368 (infra no. 55), which was written in Padua roughly in the 1490s. It is possible that these illuminations are related to the lost panels of this theme by Mantegna (mentioned in a letter from Sigismondo Cantelmo to Ercole of Ferrara in 1501). The illuminations of this codex are not related, however, to the Graz reliefs or the panels of the Kress Collection, which some scholars have tried to connect to Mantegna's lost *Trionfi*.

**55 London, Library of Major J.R. Abbey, J.A. 7368, ca. 1490–1500, Padua.**

The *Trionfo dell'Amore* is illustrated on two adjoining pages (fols. 142v–143r). The first page contains a full-page illumination where Petrarch and his friend survey the triumphal scene from a hill. The second page depicts a relief of the *Trionfo* on the base of a round architectural structure that supports the opening text. Classical motifs frame the opening page of the *Rime* (fol. 1) and an allegorical illustration of one of the poems (fol. 98v). This extraordinary illustration depicts Laura transformed into a stag pursued by hunting dogs as she flees towards an open sarcophagus, while a minute figure (Petrarch?) watches from a window. A marine landscape and ship form the background. The scribe was Bartolomeo Sanvito of Padua (1435–ca. 1518) and the script is comparable to his work of the 1490s in Rome. The style of illumination is similar to that of a number of

manuscripts attributed to Sanvito, or actually signed by him, and dated between 1495 and 1497. The miniaturist was probably from Padua, and used classical motifs, faceted capitals and the type of landscape made popular by Mantegna. (cf. a similar manuscript written by Sanvito and probably illuminated by the same hand is in Foundation Martin Bodmer Cologny, Bodmer 130, *Canzoniere & Trionfi*, which has a beautiful full-page image of Petrarch and Apollo by a laurel tree (10v) and an illumination on the opening page of the *Rime* like that described above (fol. 11r).

**56 London, Victoria and Albert Museum, cod.L 101–1947, ca. 1465–70, Padua.**

The frontispiece of the *Rime* (fol. 9v) and that of the *Trionfi* (149v) are composed of colored drawings. On the first frontispiece the miniaturist eclectically combined architectural and figural elements from various works by Mantegna (e.g. the San Zeno altar in Verona). Two illuminated pages contain the opening lines of the texts (10r, 150r). The last five *Trionfi* are illustrated in five small initials (162r, 166r, 175r, 182r, 184v). The drawings have been attributed to the miniaturist Jacometto Veneziano (act. 1472–98 in Venice and Padua), to Sanvito of Padova (1435–ca. 1518), and more recently to Franco dei Russi (act. 1450–82), but this issue still remains an open question.

**57 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Canon. Ital. 62, ca. 1470–80, Florentine.**

Miniatures include small illuminations of the six *Trionfi* in gold frames (149r, 161v, 165v, 172r, 182v, 185v), floral margins and historiated initials. On the frontispiece of the *Rime*, Daphne chased by Apollo is transformed into a laurel tree (9r). The scribe of this codex, possibly Leonardo d'Arezzo, who used humanistic script, also wrote *Montagu* e.I (infra no. 59) and other Petrarch codices in the 1460s and 70s. The miniatures come from the same Florentine milieu as Paris, *B.N.* 548; *Trivulziana* 905, *BAVL*.IV, 14, and *Br. Lib.*, *Harley* 5761 (supra nos. 4, 32, 39 & 53), all related to the style and iconography of Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico.

**58 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Canon. Ital. 83, 3rd quarter of the 15th c., North Italian.**

Preliminary pen sketches on eight pages include framed illustrations of the six *Trionfi* (fols. 1r, 18r, 22v, 31r, 44v, 48r). Other sketches depict lovers (5r) and the poet with two men (9v). Acanthus leaf margins and initials are studded with occasional birds. Musical *putti* surround a blank shield (1r). These unfinished miniatures are north Italian, closely related

to Parma 2663 and 307 (*supra* nos. 36 & 37). This codex may have been modeled on Parma 307, or else both derive from a common source.

**59 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Montagu e.I (25403), third quarter of the 15th c., Florentine.**

Minute allegorical figures, relating to each of the *Trionfi*, are incorporated into gold initials, with white vine scroll margins (fols. 4r, 21r, 30r, 35r, 49r, 52v). The opening page of the *Trionfi* (4r) contains *putti*, small narrative vignettes, one with a portrait of Petrarch, another with a fleur-de-lys, and a coat of arms depicting a castle set in a diamond ring (4r). The scribe of this codex, who used humanist script, also executed at least three others codices of Petrarch texts (Plimpton 492c, Wellesley College, Mass., Canon.Ital. 62, Oxford and former Yates Thompson 92, location unknown). White vine-scroll margins found here were common in Florence from the 1450s.

*United States*

**60 Baltimore, Maryland, Walters Art Museum, MS. 755, early 16th c., Padua. Fig. 53.**

The codex contains full-page frontispiece illuminations of the six *Trionfi* (fols. 1v, 22v, 29v, 46v, 59v, 65v). Adjoining pages have historiated initials and images associated with the *Trionfi*. Themes include Petrarch crowned with Laurel (2r), a female figure seated by a unicorn (23r), Laura on her death bed surrounded by seven females (30r), and The Transfiguration of Christ (66r). The scribe was Bartolomeo Sanvito of Padua (d.ca. 1518) who used Italic script. The illuminations have been variously attributed to the Florentine brothers Gherardo (d. 1497) and Monte di Giovanni del Fore (d. 1529), and to a Paduan contemporary or follower of Mantegna, called the "Master of the Vatican Homer" (Vat.gr. 1629, dated 1477). Compartmentalized illustrations in roundels, ovals, rectangles, etc., are ornamented by simulated sculpture resembling stucco and metalwork, with classical motifs, such as candelabras, urns, cornucopiae, trophies, dolphins and hybrid creatures. The *Trionfi* illustrations are comparatively conservative and seem to have been illustrated by two different artists. The courtly figures of the first two scenes are portrayed in classical fashions; those in the last four are in contemporary dress. Stylistic treatment of the figures also differs and traditional iconography is followed more closely in the last four illustrations. The *Trionfo del Tempo* is depicted as a lateral



composition with winged Time on his crutches carried on a chariot led by stags and accompanied by the usual cortege. The bust of Father Time appears in a roundel above and a winged *putto* flying with an hourglass is seen in a roundel below (59v).

**61 New Haven, Conn., Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS. 438, ca. 1457–60, Florentine.**

This codex has illuminations of all six *Trionfi* above the opening pages of each text (fols. 3r, 20v, 25v, 39v, 49r, 53v). The same pages have decorative initials, the first with the portrait of Petrarch, the following with female figures. White vine-scroll margins contain vignettes with female portraits, birds and beautifully depicted animals. The iconography of the *Trionfi*, with the exception of *Eternità*, follows the traditional schemes of Florentine works executed in the late 1450s or early 1460s (cf. nos. 26 & 34).

**62 New York Public Library, MA 087 (De Ricci 87), late 15th or early 16th c., Neapolitan.**

This beautiful codex contains elaborate full-page multicolored miniatures of five *Trionfi* (fols. 11r, 25r, 31r, 42r, 54v). The *Trionfo del Tempo* is missing. Five additional purple folios contain framed titles in gold (fols. 24v, 30v, 42, 53v, 62v). Each illustration and a segment of the text on white ground are framed by pseudo-classical architecture decorated with simulated reliefs of hybrids and marine creatures, and suspended trophies. The *Trionfi* illustrations seem to have been copied from the woodcuts of the 1490 printed edition (P. de Piasi, Venice), which in turn are based on Florentine engravings. The missing *Trionfo del Tempo* can therefore be reconstructed by means of the woodcut. Preceding the *Rime* is a multicolored depiction of Petrarch with the muses and an unidentified coat of arms (64r). The miniatures are attributed to Cristoforo Majorana, who worked for the Aragonese court of Naples between 1480 and 1492 (cf. Majorana's illuminations in Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Mus., *Hours of Lorenzo Strozzi*, Naples, 1478). The codex also includes Pseudo Antonio da Tempo's *Vita di Petrarca*, the *Rime*, *Nota di Laura*, and *Rerum Familiarum* (cf. J.A. 7368, supra no. 55).

\* A rare edition of *Le cose volgari*, printed by Aldus (Venice, 1514), and now in the Collection of the Duke of Devonshire, Chatsworth, is decorated with full-page illuminations of the six *Trionfi* and extraordinary title-pages (fols. 2v & 144v), inserted at later dates (see Figs. 55 & 56).

Venetian illuminations of the *Trionfi* were added to the book after 1518; the title-pages belong to the 1540s. This is probably the latest series of hand-painted *Trionfi* illustrations in a printed book, postdating its issue by at least four years. Each monochrome *Trionfo* is executed in a painterly style on a brightly colored wash. Although the iconography of the triumphal processions is anachronistic, the beautifully painted landscapes and sensitive chiaroscuro effects are characteristic of Cinquecento Venetian painting during the period of Titian's early career. Influence of Paduan and Mantuan illumination is dominant in some of the *Trionfi* illustrations, especially that of the *Trionfo della Castità*. I have suggested in an earlier study that the two title-pages were commissioned by Cosimo I de' Medici for Eleonora di Toledo in the 1540s (S. Cohen, "An Aldine Volume of Petrarch Illuminated for a Prestigious Patron," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 73, 2010, 187–210.)

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## APPENDIX II

### ILLUSTRATED INCUNABULA AND BOOKS CONTAINING PETRARCH'S *TRIONFI*, 1478–1610

The following printed editions of Petrarch's work contain printed illustrations of the *Trionfi*. All the printed editions have woodcut illustrations, with the exception of an incunabulum of the 1470 Vindelino di Spira edition, some copies of the 1478 edition (see below), and individual issues of the 1509 and 1514 Aldine editions (Paris, Bibl.Nat., Velins 2142 and the Chatsworth *Trionfi*, see Appendix I), which contain hand-painted illuminations. The 1494 Zarotus edition has two woodcuts and four metalcuts.

#### *Italy*

Date	Location	Printer/Publisher	reprint of
1478	Venice	Teodoro de Reynsburg & Rinaldo da Novimagio	
1488	Venice	Bernardini Rizzo da Novara	
1490	Venice	Piero de Plasiis (Veronese)	
1491/2 repr.	Venice	Piero de Plasiis (Veronese)	1490
1492/3	Venice	Giovanni Codeca	
1494	Milan	Antonio Zarotus	
1494	Milan	Ulrich Scinzenzeler	
1494	Venice	Piero Quaregni	1488
1497	Venice	Bartolomeo Zani	1492/3
1499	Florence	Piero Pacini	
1500 repr.	Venice	Bartolomeo Zani	1492/3
1500	Venice	Niccolo Zoppino & Vincenzo de Polo	
1503	Venice	Albero da Lissone	1492/3
1508	Venice	Gregorius de Gregoriis	
1508 repr.	Venice	Bartolomeo Zani	1492/3
1508 repr.	Florence	Piero Pacini	1499
1512	Milano	Ulrich Scinzenzeler	
1513	Venice	Bernardino Stagnino	1508
1515	Florence	Filippo di Giunta	1508
1515	Venice	Agostino de Zani da Portese	1492/3
1519 repr.	Venice	Bernardino Stagnino & G. de Gregoriis	1508
1521 repr.	Venice	Niccolo Zoppino & Vincenzo de Polo	1500

Table (*cont.*)

Date	Location	Printer/Publisher	reprint of
1522 repr.	Florence	Filippo di Giunta	1508
1522 repr.	Venice	Bernardino Stagnino & G. de Gregoriis	1508
1526 repr.	Venice	Niccolo Zoppino & Vincenzo de Polo	1500
1526	Venice	Melchior Sessa	1500
1528	Venice	Bernardino de Vidali	1500
1530 repr.	Venice	Niccolo Zoppino	1500
1535	Venice	Vittore Ravani	1500
1536 repr.	Venice	Niccolo Zoppino	1500
1542	Venice	Agostino Bidoni	1500
1543	Venice	Bernardini Bidoni	
1543	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	
1544 repr.	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	1543
1547	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	
1549	Venice	Gioambattista Pederzano & Pietro & Gioanmaria de Nicolino da Sabio	
1550 repr.	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	
1552/3	Venice	Domenico Giglio	
1553	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	1547
1554 repr.	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	1547
1557 repr.	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	1547
1558 repr.	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	1547
1559 repr.	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	1547
1559 repr.	Venice	G. Pederzano & P. & G. de Nicolino da Sabio	1549
1559	Venice	Vincenzo Valgrisi	Giolito
1560 repr.	Venice	Vincenzo Valgrisi	1543 Giolito
1560 repr.	Venice	Gabriel Giolito	1547
1560	Venice	Gian' Andrea Valvassori	Giolito
1562	Venice	Niccolo Bevilacqua	1543 Giolito
1563 repr.	Venice	Niccolo Bevilacqua	1543 Giolito
1564	Venice	Giovanni Griffio	1549
1568 repr.	Venice	Giovanni Griffio	1549
1568 repr.	Venice	Niccolo Bevilacqua	1543
1570 repr.	Venice	Niccolo Bevilacqua	1543
1571	Venice	Vincenzo Valgrisi	1549
1573 repr.	Venice	Giovanni Griffio	1549
1573	Venice	Antonio Bertrano	1543
1574	Venice	Iacomo Vidali	1543



Table (*cont.*)

Date	Location	Printer/Publisher	reprint of
1580	Venice	Pietro Dehuchino	
1581/2	Venice	Alessandro Griffio	1549
1584 repr.	Venice	Antonio Bertrano	Giolito
			1543
1586 repr.	Venice	Pietro Dehuchino	1580
1586	Venice	Giorgio Angelieri	
1588	Venice	Alessandro Griffio	1549
1610	Venice	Nicolo Misserini	

*France\**

Date	Location	Printer/Publisher	reprint of
1514	Paris	Antoine Verard	
1519	Paris	Jehan de la Garde	
1520	Paris	Hémon Le Fèvre	1519
1525	Paris	Philippe Le Noir	
1531/2	Lyon	Romain Morin	
1538	Paris	Denys Janot (trans. J.I. Meynier)	
1539	Paris	Denys Janot (trans. J.I. Meynier)	
1545	Paris	Jeanne de Marnef **	1538
1547	Lyon	Jean de Tournes	
1550	Lyon	Guillaume Rouille	
1551 repr.	Lyon	Guillaume Rouille	
1554	Paris	Estienne Groulleau	
1558	Lyon	Guillaume Rouille	
1564 repr.	Lyon	Guillaume Rouille	
1568 repr.	Lyon	Guillaume Rouille	

\* Although printed editions of the *Trionfi* were issued in the 16th century in other countries, besides Italy and France, these rarely included illustrations. The few original woodcut series which were published (e.g. in Spain) adopted the traditional Italian iconography.

\*\* The printer Jeanne de Marnef, was the widow of Denys Janot and printed under her own name even after her subsequent marriage to Groulleau. There were at least 25 women printers/publishers in the late 15th and 16th centuries, but Marnef was the only one to print Petrarch's *Triumphes*. See Leah Chang, "The Gender of the Book, Jeanne de Marnef edits Pernette de Guillet, in Julie D. Campbell & Anne R. Larsen (eds.), *Early Modern Women and Transnational Communities of Letters*, Burlington (VT.), 2009, esp. 97–111.

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